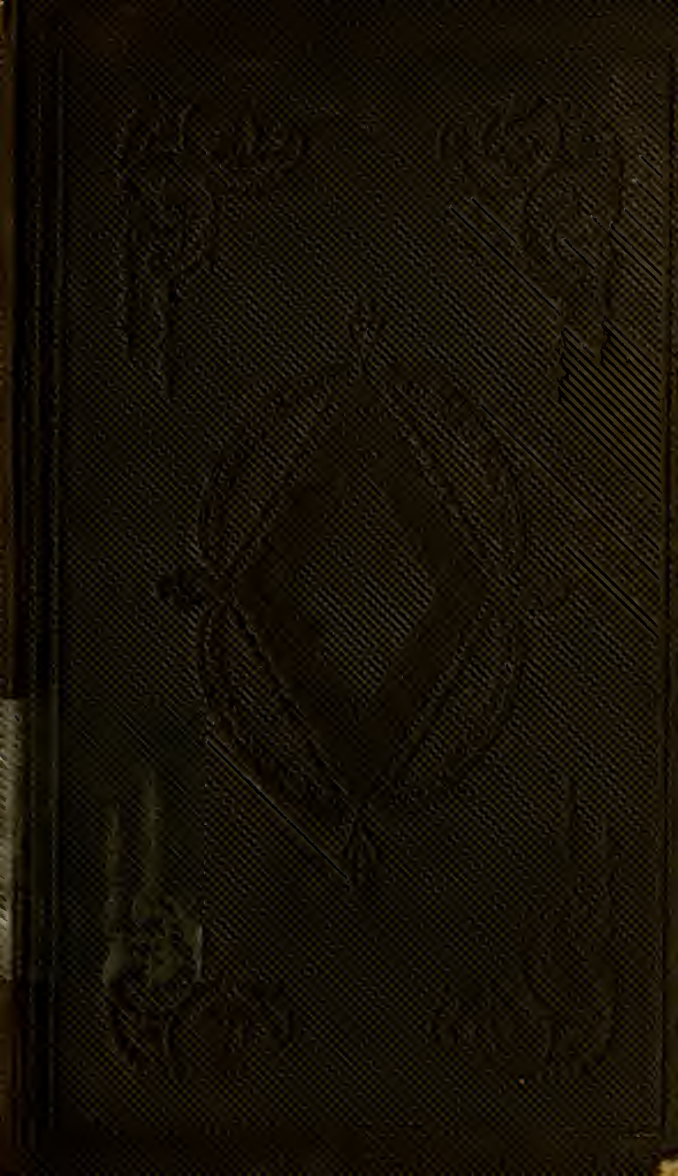

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Memoir of Thomas Cranfield,
of London

No.....

MEMOIR

OF

THOMAS CRANFIELD,

OF LONDON.

BY HIS SON.

ASSISTED BY REV. DR. HARRIS, AUTHOR OF "MAMMON," "THE GREAT COMMISSION," ETC.

REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

First American Edition.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

The following pages are abridged from the English edition of the life and writings of Thomas Cranfield, by his son, aided by the Rev. Dr. Harris, author of Mammon, The Great Commission, &c., and the Rev. James Sherman, successor to Rowland Hill, of Surrey Chapel, under whose ministry Mr. Cranfield sat many years.

His life was distinguished by great vicissitudes, and after his conversion, it was devoted, with little intermission, to the temporal and spiritual good of all over whom he could exert an influence, and with a zeal and activity almost unequalled. We know not whether to admire him most as the indefatigable Sabbath and infant school teacher, the untiring domestic missionary, tract and Bible distributor, the zealous friend of the prisoners, the bold reprover of vice

in every form, or the most liberal and bounteous contributor to want and suffering, of every kind; praying always that all might be made heirs of heaven. For nearly fifty years, and before societies were formed, as they have been in later days, he went about, like his divine Master, doing good to every variety of want and woe, cheerfully giving his time and his property,—his all,—to instruct the ignorant, and lead sinners to the Saviour; causing hundreds to bless God for his works of faith and labors of love.

Honored and beloved, this eminent servant of the Lord Jesus brought forth fruit, even in extreme old age, until he had numbered more than four-score years, when he calmly fell asleep, and went, as all who knew him doubted not, to receive the welcome plaudit of "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." That this exceedingly interesting memoir may cause hundreds in our land to copy his example, is the prayer of the Committee of the Sabbath School Society.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

The following Memoir was to have been accompanied with a recommendatory preface from the elegant pen of Dr. Harris, who kindly assisted in revising the MS., and, from his conviction that it was calculated to be extensively useful, promised to introduce it to the notice of the public. Indisposition has, however, interfered with his design, and his physician has recommended his abstinence from whatever mental exertion he can avoid. Under these circumstances, it has been thought advisable to publish the work without further delay, in the anticipation that, in a short time, the Doctor's convalescence will enable the author to present his judgment and commendation of the Memoir.

It affords me great pleasure that the testi-

mony of my dear friend, Dr. Harris, so entirely accords with my own. I am permitted to say, that he thinks the Memoir so instructive, so interesting, and withal so well written, that its general excellence is its own recommendation; and that he is persuaded the book will be extensively read by those who take an interest in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom, and especially by those who are engaged in the spiritual instruction of children.

The Life of Thomas Cranfield is a standing memorial of the blessed effects which result from the enlightened zeal and Christian perseverance of one man, in the cause of the dear Redeemer. May it encourage such as labor for their Master amidst much infirmity and opposition, "to have respect unto the recompense of reward;"—to cause those in the Christian church, who have greater opportunities and talents for usefulness, to blush that they are so little employed for the salvation of souls; and stir up every individual who reads it, to imitate him who now "rests from his labors, and whose works do follow him." J. Sherman.

Surrey Chapel, 29th November, 1839.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE following pages have been compiled at the earnest solicitation of a numerous body of friends, who have long indulged the desire of viewing, more minutely, the life and character of the man whose living excellencies they have often felt and acknowledged; and while the writer feels no desire to elude the scourge of fair criticism, by clothing himself with apologies, yet he considers that some are due to the public for inviting its attention to a production emanating from so unskilful a pen.

It was his own wish that the papers of his venerated parent should have been placed in the hands of his esteemed pastor, the Rev. James Sherman, the successor of the late Rev. Rowland Hill, of Surrey Chapel, London, whose ability and experience would

have enabled him to delineate the peculiar incidents in the life of the deceased, and the unusual share which he acquired in the affections of the poor, in a manner far more powerful and attractive than he was capable of portraying them. His wishes, however, were overruled by the Rev. Mr. S., who, with a kindness which will never cease to be gratefully remembered, instructed him in the proper arrangement of the work, and at the sacrifice of much valuable time, revised it when completed, and placed it in a condition to meet the public eye. In addition to this, the author received the valuable assistance of the Rev. Dr. Harris, author of Mammon, who, notwithstanding the multiplicity of his engagements, most kindly consented to examine the manuscript, and to write a preface for the work, which latter service he was unable to perform in consequence of ill health. To both of these esteemed ministers, therefore, the author feels himself under a deep obligation, as to them this volume is indebted for much of its interest and value.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in fixing the precise dates of some of the transactions here recorded; and though great care has been taken to insert them in their proper order, yet it has been discovered, when too late for correction, that

the anecdote relating to the Rev. John Berridge, in chapter IV, occurred some time previous to the period assigned to it.

The writer feels deeply grateful to those numerous individuals who have so kindly aided him in publishing this work, by forwarding their names as subscribers.

He also acknowledges, with gratitude, the kind assistance which he has received from several friends who have furnished him with much information, and forwarded to him many letters of the deceased. These have materially lightened his labors, as his father, previous to his death, committed a number of valuable papers to the flames, because, as he expressed it, they *smelt of self*. The limits of this work, however, forbid the insertion of more than a very few of his letters, and such only have been selected as tend to illustrate some peculiar feature in his character.

With much fear and trembling, the work is now commended to the blessing of God, and to the favor of the public, with the hope, that while it will serve to illustrate, in some measure, the nature of true religion, and the mysterious but all-wise course of Divine Providence, it may stimulate others to greater zeal in the service of Christ, and enkindle in them stronger desires for the extension of his kingdom.

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE BIRTH OF THOMAS CRANFIELD TO HIS MARRIAGE.

The subject of this Memoir was born on the 12th of March, 1758, in the parish of Southwark, in the city of London, and was baptized at St. Saviour's Church. He was the only son of Thomas Cranfield, a journeyman laborer, but afterwards a fellowship-porter; a man totally unlettered, and ignorant of the great truths of Christianity, although outwardly moral in his conduct. His mother was able to read pretty fluently, and this was then considered no ordinary acquisition for a woman in her sphere of life.

His father had but two children—a son and a daughter; and being sensible of the disadvantages under which he had labored, from

the want of proper education, he was resolved that his offspring should receive the benefit of early instruction. Accordingly, at seven years of age, Thomas was sent to the parochial school of St Mary Overie, Southwark, and continued there until he was fourteen. He was, however, averse to instruction, and impatient of control; and being naturally of a fiery temper, he would not submit to the discipline and restraint of a well-regulated school, but played the truant for two or three successive weeks.

For these offences he was severely punished by his master and his father, but without effect. As he grew older, his aversion to books became still more manifest; he was generally the last in his class, while in fights and contentions he was always foremost. Many were the pugilistic encounters which took place among his schoolfellows through his influence; and often has he induced them to sally out in a body for the purpose of attacking the scholars of some neighboring school. These dangerous contentions were sometimes carried on to a most alarming extent, particularly one headed by him on London Bridge, in which he and several of his companions were severely wounded, and some were carried home almost lifeless.

At this time, he was addicted to the most

vicious practices. In a letter written to a friend, shortly before his decease, he states, "I can say with Mr. Whitefield, that I was froward from my earliest days. I was so brutish as to hate instruction, and shun all opportunities of receiving it. I can date very early acts of lying, filthy talking, profanity, Sabbath-breaking, purloining money from my mother's pocket before she was up; and once I stole the brass hooks from the gallery of a church in Monkwell street, where my grandfather was the pew-opener. Indeed, it would be impossible to mention all the sins and offences of my younger days, for which my heart would fail me in this recital, did I not believe that I have truly repented of them, and were I not assured that Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for me." He was likewise very cruel in his disposition, especially towards the brute creation. To torment horses, dogs, sheep, pigs and cats, would afford him the greatest merriment and delight.

St. Jude speaks of persons being "preserved in Christ Jesus and called." Such was evidently the case with this youth, who experienced some most remarkable instances of providential deliverance. Once he fell into a deep muddy ditch, from which he was extricat-

ed with much difficulty, and apparently lifeless. At another time, when crossing the river Thames in a boat, he fell overboard, but was picked up by a fisherman, who was providentially pursuing his occupation when the accident happened.

None of these things, however, suitably affected him; he grew more hardened in sin, and imbibed a still stronger hatred to every thing like instruction. The consequence was, that when removed from school, he was scarcely able to read the New Testament, and could write but indifferently.

On attaining his fourteenth year, his father apprenticed him to Mr. Poole, a respectable tailor in the city, who took great interest in his youthful charge, and labored to the utmost of his power, to promote his moral and spiritual improvement. He took him twice every Sabbath to public worship at Haberdasher's Hall, where he heard the Rev. Dr. Gibbon; but the service to him was so extremely wearisome that he often endeavored, though in vain, to prevail on his master to excuse his attendance.

Mr. Poole, knowing the depraved inclinations of his apprentice, would not lose sight of him on the Sabbath, and thus, like Doeg the Edomite, he was "detained before the Lord."

Fifteen months passed away in this manner, during which time he had made considerable progress, not only in his business, but also in reading and writing; but being weary of restraint, he meditated his escape, and an occurrence soon furnished him with an opportunity of carrying his design into execution. His master had a favorite bird, and Thomas was ordered to clean out his cage; and leaving the door of the prison open, the bird, being as great a lover of liberty as his attendant, quickly made his escape. For this negligence the youth was threatened with punishment; and being resolved to abscond from his situation, he thought this a fitting opportunity. Therefore immediately packing up his clothes and other articles, he left his place, and travelled out of the city towards St. Albans, where he arrived the same evening, and found a lodging, for which he paid two pence. He rose early the following morning, and set forward with great haste for Northampton, a distance of forty-five miles, which he reached the same evening. The following morning found him on his way to Coventry, and here his stock of money being exhausted, he sold his new suit of clothes for half a guinea. At this city he rested one day, and then pushed forward to

Birmingham, where he hoped to obtain employment.

Mr. Poole, upon hearing that his apprentice had absconded, immediately acquainted his parents, who sent in all directions to ascertain the place of his concealment, not doubting that he was somewhere about the town. But after fruitlessly searching for him many days, they gave up all hopes of ever seeing him again, believing that he was drowned.

Upon his arrival at Birmingham, not knowing any person to whom he could apply for employment or assistance, he proceeded to the market-place, and endeavored to excite a feeling of interest in the minds of the butchers and others, by representing himself as an orphan. In the day time he would stand in the market-place for hire, and at night would crawl beneath the stalls to rest. Unable to obtain employment, and reduced to great necessity, he followed the coal carts, assisting to carry the coal into the purchasers' houses, and picking up various articles in the streets for sale. He now began to repent of his rash and disobedient conduct, and being reduced almost literally to the food that the swine ate, like the Prodigal he turned his thoughts to his father's house, where there was "bread enough

and to spare;" but a sense of shame, a want of true repentance, and of money for his journey, prevented him from returning home.

All his endeavors failing to procure proper subsistence, and being pressed hard by hunger, he was reduced, as his last resource, to sell his Bible, of which he was extremely choice, it having been presented to him by his mother. At length, however, he obtained employment at a tailor's, for whom he agreed to work merely for his food. But here he was half-starved; his employer being a drunken character, had but little money for any thing but liquor, and poor Thomas often retired to rest without having tasted any food since the morning.

To add to his misery, his brutish employer had a favorite dog, with which he was obliged to share his meals. This dog's name was Bob; and his master often stood over Thomas while the scanty provision was divided, and then compelled him to toss up a penny with Bob, to determine by lot which should have the best share of the food.

Finding it impossible to exist in his situation he at length found another tailor, who consented to take him, if he would bind himself to stay with him seven years. Here he had to contend with great hardships. His employer

was extremely severe and unmerciful, frequently compelling him to work from four o'clock in the morning, until eleven or twelve at night, for many days together, while he was badly clothed and fed. Upon the slightest offence, and sometimes for no offence at all, he was horsewhipped in the most severe and degrading manner, although he now strove to the utmost of his power to serve and please his hard-hearted master. Notwithstanding the cruel treatment he here experienced, he continued in this situation for more than three years, when having made considerable progress in his business, he was resolved to leave his tyrannical employer, and endeavor to gain a subsistence by what was called "whipping the cat;" a term given by tailors to the practice of jobbing at the houses of private individuals. Watching his opportunity, therefore, he secretly left Birmingham and proceeded to Bridgenorth. Here he continued but a short time; for finding it extremely difficult to obtain employment, he resolved to return to London, and to submit himself to his old master, during the proper term of his apprenticeship. With this determination he left B. in August, 1777, and was on his road to Worcester, when he met with a recruiting party belonging to the

39th regiment of foot, and was by them induced to enlist into his Majesty's service, upon the understanding that he should not be sent against the Americans, whom he regarded as his fellow-countrymen, and their resistance against the oppressive acts of the British government as lawful and right.

War was at this time waging in America with extreme violence, and great exertions were making by the British government to reduce the revolted provinces to obedience. All Europe appeared to be in a state of agitation, and it was feared the courts of France and Spain would soon take part in the contest, and declare on the side of the Americans. It was, therefore of the highest importance that the strong fortress of Gibraltar, a place so important to the commercial interests of Great Britain, should be strengthened and put in a proper state of defence. With this view the 39th regiment was ordered to hold itself in readiness for marching, on the first summons, to join the garrison there. These apprehensions were but too well founded, for very soon afterwards the French Government issued a hostile declaration against Great Britain, which was followed by one from the court of Spain.

As soon as Cranfield had joined the regi-

ment, he was marched forward to Wolverhampton, and there ascertaining that he was shortly to leave England and embark for Gibraltar, he began to reflect seriously upon his situation. He thought of home, his parents, his sister, his old master and mistress, all of whom were endeared to him by the recollection of their constant though fruitless endeavors to promote his happiness and improvement. The ingratitude he had shown, and the rebellious and undutiful conduct he had manifested towards those who had been solicitous only for his welfare, stung him with bitter anguish; all that filial affection for which he was afterwards remarkable, now seemed to manifest itself, and he was resolved to write to his parents, expressing his contrition for his disobedience, and begging their forgiveness, and informing them of his present situation. He reflected that he was now about to leave his native country, and in all probability should never more return to it; and the thought of never again seeing those whom he loved, and whom he had so deeply injured, distressed him exceedingly, and induced him to make every inquiry as to the probability of his going to London previous to embarking for a foreign shore. It was therefore with the greatest

delight that he received the information of his general being then in town, and the probability there was, that his regiment would soon be ordered to join him there. He accordingly wrote to his father to the foregoing effect, and shortly after received a kind and affectionate reply, dictated by him.

It was just previous to this incident, that the Sovereign Disposer of all events, without whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground, had brought about an event of the utmost importance, in its nature and consequences, to the family of Cranfield. The father of Thomas, strolling one Sabbath day along the streets of London, came near the Church of St. Anns, Blackfriars, just as several of the congregation were entering. Prompted by curiosity, he went in with the crowd, and heard the Rev. William Romaine. The word under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, was brought with power home to his mind; so that he became convinced of sin, and of the necessity of salvation through the atoning blood of the Saviour of men. He now felt the value of the Bible; viewing it as a mine in which were hid rich and inexhaustible treasures, he felt an unconquerable desire to explore it for himself; he therefore sat down, at the age of forty-two, to

learn his letters, and in a short space of time, was enabled, by the assistance of his wife, to read with considerable fluency any part of the inspired volume. Being now instructed by the wisest of all teachers, he became qualified to give his son the very best advice; and upon the receipt of his letter, he sent an answer, expressing the distress which his rash conduct had brought upon his parents, who for so many years had received no tidings of him; assuring him, nevertheless, of their continued regard and affection for one they had long considered as dead, but who they hoped would be henceforth steady in his conduct, read diligently his Bible, and by no means neglect prayer.

This letter removed a great burthen from the mind of their long absent, wayward son, who was deeply conscious that he merited no such tenderness, and he took an early opportunity to give the following reply.

"Wolverhampton, Sept. 26th, 1777.

"Honored Father,—I received your kind letter: am glad to hear that you are all well. I return you my thanks for your good advice; and I hope to make it my constant study, on all occasions, to obey your commands in every thing. I hope that you and my dear mother

will make yourselves as contented as you possibly can about me. I expect to be in London very soon, as we intend to set out from here in three days. I shall make it my business to see you all as soon as I arrive. I doubt not you were greatly surprised to receive my letter, after hearing nothing from me for so many years. Please to give my love to my sister.

I remain, honored father, your undutiful son,

THOMAS CRANFIELD."

The pleasing anticipations of seeing his parents before he left England were not realized, as the regiment was ordered to take a different and shorter route to Portsmouth, where, on his arrival, he was embarked on board the ship Mary, where he wrote another letter to his parents, assuring them of his disappointment in not being indulged with an opportunity of seeing them, and of his continued love and affection; designating himself again as their undutiful son.

From Gibraltar he wrote them on the 30th of November, saying, "I am in want of nothing at present, and meet with very good friends, who give me good advice."

Here he made rapid progress in becoming an expert soldier, though he found it to be

galling work. As he could now read and write tolerably well, he was esteemed in the regiment a good scholar, and he became a favorite with his commanding officer, being courageous, industrious, neat in person, and attentive to orders. So soon, therefore, as he became master of his exercise, his regular duties as a private were discontinued, and he was employed in making clothes for the regiment, which added much to his income.

In a letter to his parents, dated the 25th of March, 1778, he says:—

"I return you the most unfeigned thanks for the fatherly advice you have given me from time to time; be assured I shall lay it up in my heart, as the most valuable treasure that has ever been committed to my charge: and by the assistance of my Redeemer, I shall do my duty to him, and to every person that is put in authority over me. I work now at the regiment's clothing, and do well at present. I shall pray God to give me grace to go through all the hardships that are before me.

"Your ever loving and dutiful son until death,

THOMAS CRANFIELD."

It must not, however, be supposed, from hts using such language, that he was a con-

verted person. His heart was as yet untouched by divine grace, and he was still living without God, and without any realizing sense of the awful wickedness of his own heart. He found his father's letters urging upon him the importance of attention to the concerns of his soul, and he introduced such expressions, occasionally in reply, as he afterwards remarked, merely to please his parents, and to induce them to entertain a more favorable opinion of him.

From this period nothing of particular importance occurred until the summer of 1779, when the Spaniards, having issued a hostile manifesto against Great Britain, laid siege to Gibraltar, its reduction being one of the principal objects of the court of Spain in becoming a party to the war. This was well known to the gallant commander of the fortress, General Elliot, who rightly judged that no exertion would be wanting, nor expense spared, to accomplish this favorite object. Accordingly, every precaution was taken and every means employed that prudence could suggest, or ingenuity devise, to make a vigorous defence.

The town and fortress of Gibraltar stand upon a rocky eminence in Andalusia, the most southern province in Spain. The rock is connected with the continent by an isthmus of low

sand, and almost wholly surrounded by the waters of the Mediterranean, forms a promontory three miles in length from north to south. On this isthmus the Spaniards encamped in the month of June, to the number of 20,000 men, while the garrison was defended by less than 6000. Thus all communication was cut off from the continent, while Spanish armed vessels and gun boats sailed in all directions, to prevent any supplies being furnished on the sea side. At the sight of the enemy, Cranfield's spirit was much excited, and burning with desire to be actively employed against the Spaniards, he requested his commander to allow him to take his share in the duties and dangers of the camp, from which, by his employment, he was exempt.

October 6, 1779, he thus wrote to his father:

"Every thing now wears the face of war. Upwards of 20,000 soldiers are now in the camp before us, whom we hourly expect to open their batteries upon us. On Sunday morning, 12th Sept., about seven o'clock, we gave them upwards of six thousand 32 pound-shots in less than half an hour, which made them quickly run into their lines.

Every now and then we fire on them, which they have hitherto refused to return. We expect, however, they will soon storm us; though unless they starve us out, it is impossible they can take the garrison. There is no fresh meat in the place, and provisions are very dear. The other day a boat succeeded in getting in with some sheep, which sold for four shillings and ninepence a pound, and there was almost fighting for it among the inhabitants."

It was not until the 12th of April, 1781, that the Spaniards opened their fire upon the town and fortress, when they poured in such a prodigious discharge of shot and shells from their forts, lines, and advanced works, as created among the inhabitants the greatest consternation and alarm. So terrible was the sight, that the oldest veteran in the regiment declared that he had never witnessed any thing equal to it The feelings of the young soldier will be best described in the following extract of a letter, written more than twenty years after the event.

"I shall never forget the day the Spaniards commenced their attack upon Gibraltar.

It was in the afternoon, and I was on duty. Never having heard the whistling of a cannon-shot before, I was filled with horror beyond expression. My old sins, and the roaring of the artillery, produced strange commotion in my soul, and it seemed as if I was about being summoned before my final Judge, to be turned into hell. My regiment lay in barracks in the town. I dreaded to go near them, but duty called, and I was compelled to obey. I sat up that night to watch the shells. The town was soon in flames, and the inhabitants left their property to seek shelter in the caves of the rocks. The soldiers, finding the place deserted, commenced a general search for plunder. I, however, got used to this state of things, and in a short time cared nothing whatever for either shot or shells."

Cranfield was kind and obliging; consequently much beloved by his comrades; his willingness also to lend or read to them in his mother's Bible, which he had again procured before he left England, and which, as he understood, was the only one in the regiment, gained for him much of their esteem and regard. His general good conduct was likewise noticed by his colonel, who, in consequence,

raised him to the rank of corporal, and entrusted him with several important commissions, which he executed with credit to himself, and to the approbation of the officers.

The care which he had for the lives of the men placed under his command was praiseworthy. Though reckless of danger himself, he never would consent to expose the lives of others unnecessarily. Many have been saved through his instrumentality, not only from the shots of the enemy, but also from the rigor of military law.

It may reasonably be supposed that in a siege carried on with so much vigor, and so protracted, the dangers to which this gallant soldier was exposed were many and great. On one occasion, when appointed to guard a magazine, which the enemy were desirous of destroying, the firing was so hot that curiosity prompted him to reckon the number of shells that fell near him; and in one hour he counted no less than eighty, besides cannon balls.

His escape under such circumstances can only be accounted for by the special protection of that Being who was preparing him for other duty under the Captain of his salvation. At times, after having been on duty for several hours together without receiving any injury,

another, upon taking his place, has been instantly killed. Frequently, also, when overcome with fatigue, he has lain all night upon the wet ground without injury.

Such was the scarcity of provisions that frequently driven by hunger he has been compelled to eat, not only the flesh of dogs and cats, but also of rats, which at times afforded a welcome repast. Bread at this time was selling in the town at a guinea a quartern loaf, and even at this price it could with difficulty be procured. A small leg of mutton at one time was sold for £3.12—a goose for £3; cheese and butter were five shillings, and tea two guineas a pound. The entrails of a pig or ox were eagerly purchased at four shillings and six pence per pound. Vegetables were equally scarce and dear. For weeks the garrison were obliged to subsist on four ounces of rice a day for each man, and their valiant General Elliot was the first to confine himself to this allowance, a fact stated in the history of that almost unparalleled siege.

In the year 1782, the Spanish monarch, having accomplished the reduction of Minorca, turned his whole attention to the siege of Gibraltar. Duke de Crillon, the conqueror of Minorca, was appointed captain-general of the

French and Spanish armies, which now amounted to forty thousand men, and these, together with forty-seven sail of the line, besides floating batteries, frigates, and other vessels of war, were employed for this great enterprise. An attack was made on the 13th Sept., 1782, which ended in blowing up the battering ships, and great destruction to the allied forces. Corporal Cranfield most gallantly maintained his post; he toiled incessantly all that morning, and about two o'clock saw the battering ship, which he had been so long assisting to destroy, was on fire. His joy at this success was unbounded. He danced like a maniac, and shouted, victory! victory! so long and so loud that at length his voice failed him, and it was some days before he recovered it. In this dreadful encounter he escaped unhurt, with the exception of a slight wound in the leg by a splinter from the rock. The Lord, who is rich in mercy, thus preserved the life of this intrepid soldier, for the performance of acts of benevolence and mercy, and that he might afterwards become a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

How awful are the effects of war! It calls into exercise the worst passions of human nature, and leads a man to triumph over the

sufferings of his fellow-man, and to rejoice at his defeat and destruction. But truly horrific is the thought of thousands and tens of thousands of the human family being thus launched into the eternal world without a moment's time for serious reflection, or an opportunity of preparing to meet their God. The mind sickens at the contemplation, and turns from it with disgust and abhorrence. Of the number that fell on that memorable day, how few can we suppose were ready to depart and be with Christ. Mr. Cranfield in after life often declared that in his regiment he knew not one pious man; nor can we suppose the defeated allies were much better instructed in the things of God.

Though all hopes of taking Gibraltar by open force were now abandoned, the Spaniards still kept up a vigorous blockade by sea and land. On the 11th of October the garrison was greatly relieved by the arrival of a large cargo of provisions from England, which Lord Howe, by a masterly manœuvre, succeeded in landing in face of a superior fleet.

In 1783, Corporal Cranfield, through his good behaviour, was appointed master-tailor to the regiment, which employment was the means of supplying him with an income supe-

rior to that of many of the commissioned officers. He now applied himself industriously to business, and succeeded in amassing a considerable amount of property; but one evening, while absent, a shell broke through their quarters and destroyed the building, together with all that he possessed. This was a severe loss, especially as he expected soon to return to England, without the opportunity of repairing it; but it was, nevertheless, wisely overruled by divine Providence for his ultimate good.

In September, 1783, the preliminaries of peace having been signed, the siege was raised, and on the 20th of the same month he was married to a most amiable person, who had only just entered her sixteenth year. So great was the estimation in which the parties were held, that Lieut. Gen. Boyd was present at the marriage ceremony, and gave away the bride; and now finding himself in possession of the object of his affections, and the war having terminated, he looked forward to a state of uninterrupted happiness and prosperity.

CHAPTER II.

FROM HIS MARRIAGE TO HIS REMOVAL TO KINGSLAND.

The period at length arrived when Mr. Cranfield was to leave Gibraltar, where, since the year 1777, he had been for the greater part of the period of six years, actively engaged in his Majesty's service, in which he had been exposed to such hardships, fatigues, and dangers, as none but those possessed of the strongest constitution could have endured. At one time, the scurvy had made such inroads upon his constitution, not having tasted fresh provisions for nearly two years and a half, that his life was in imminent danger; but a diligent and persevering use of lemon-juice, of which he could obtain frequent supplies, proved, by the blessing of God, the means of counteracting the baneful effects of the disorder. On the morning of the 30th of October, 1783, he, with his regiment, embarked in a man-of-war for England, where, however, he did not arrive till the December following. On his application for his discharge, the colonel of the regiment expressed his unwillingness to part with

such a brave soldier, and offered him the sum of five guineas, and further promotion if he would remain in the army; but as he had written to his father, and his mind was entirely made up on the subject, the offer was respectfully declined, and he was honorably discharged, to the universal regret of both officers and men. Every thing being now in readiness, he waited only the arrival of his wife, to take his departure for London. Day, however, passed after day, without any tidings being heard of her or of the transport in which she had embarked. His anxiety of mind became almost insupportable, and if he could have obtained a vessel, he would have gone in search of her; but this was impossible. His feelings were somewhat relieved by the receipt of a letter from his father, assuring him of his continued affection and regard.

At length the long and anxiously-looked-for vessel arrived, and after seven days of the most fearful suspense, he again embraced the beloved object in whom all his thoughts had been so long centered. He now thought himself the happiest of men. With a light heart he took leave of his old comrades, and accompanied by his wife, proceeded to London, arriving at his father's house in Queenhithe on the even-

ing of the 24th of December, after an absence of nearly eleven years. The meeting of the father with his only son was similar to that described in the parable of the Prodigal, he exclaiming, "This my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." He viewed him as sent back to him by the hand of God alone, and entirely in answer to prayer. It is worthy of notice, that just previous to the bombardment of Gibraltar, a prayer meeting was held by some poor aged people, friends of the parents, on behalf of their absent son, when it was most earnestly implored that the Lord would be pleased to spare his life, and restore him again to his family and his friends. After the meeting an aged woman present declared her belief that their petition was heard, and would be answered, as this passage of Scripture was impressed most powerfully on her mind: "Yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled." Mr. C. often afterwards mentioned this circumstance, as an encouragement to parents similarly situated, to continue in prayer for their ungodly children.

After the detail of his principal adventures and escapes, the Bible was placed on the table, and, to his great surprise, his father

commenced reading a chapter. When this was finished, he was still more astonished to hear his father say, "Now, my boy, let us go to prayer." All knelt down, and he began with great fluency and fervor to express his gratitude to God who had answered his prayers in bringing back his only son in health and safety. Mr. C. was amazed to hear his father proceed with such freedom of speech, and prompted by curiosity, he arose from his knees, and looked across the table to ascertain if his father was not using a book. But when he saw him with his eyes closed, and no book before him, he was lost in wonder and astonishment, and as he afterwards expressed it, could scarcely believe his own eyes. It will be remembered that his father could not read a word when his son ran away, was an irreligious man, and never had set up a family altar, but lived as too many do at this day, without God in the world. Now how changed the scene. Salvation had come to that house; the morning and evening vows were paid; and the father pours out his heart in grateful thanksgivings and supplications, that the son, over whom his heart more tenderly yearned than ever before, might become a child of God, an heir of glory.

At six o'clock the following morning, being

Christmas day, Mr. C. was prevailed on by his father to accompany him to hear the Rev. R. Cecil. His text was Psalm 46: 9. "He maketh wars to cease." The subject of the discourse, and the powerful appeals of the minister, strongly riveted his attention, and he appeared much pleased with the whole of the discourse. His father, therefore, had little difficulty to persuade him to accompany him to Blackfriars church to hear Rev. W. Romaine. On the following day he went to visit some of his old companions, and returning home late in the evening, intoxicated, he found his pious father at family prayer. Being bereft of his proper senses, he became very disorderly, and with his hand swept every thing from the mantel-shelf. His father said little to him that night; but the following day, when sense and reason were awakened, he gave him a solemn reprimand for his improper conduct; explained to him the awful consequences of the sin of intemperance, the impossibility of his remaining under the paternal roof, where he had been so kindly welcomed, if he persisted in such evil practices. This affectionate and solemn reproof appeared to produce the desired effect, and on the following Sabbath he requested permission to accompany his

father to church. The Rev. Mr. Romaine was preaching a series of lectures on the building of Solomon's Temple, and showed wherein it typified Christ. These lectures interested him much, as many remarks were made which furnished him with thoughts which he intended to embody in an intended lecture on free-masonry; but the Lord had better work for him to do, and was now about to prepare him for it. In one of these discourses, the esteemed minister dwelt more than usual on the depravity of the human heart, and its opposition to the sovereignty and dominion of God, and showed that this division between God and the creature would not admit of any union without a change of nature. By this truth, accompanied by the solemn appeal to every sinner to give up his sins, his mind became, in some degree, convinced of the awful state of its alienation from God, and the necessity of regeneration. And although his first impressions were comparatively slight, and this change in his views and feelings, like the dawning of the morning, was scarcely perceptible, yet in the course of a few days it became evident that a principle of grace had been imparted, and that he, who commanded light to shine out of darkness had shined into his heart.

His pious father, who was on the watch for the first tokens of true penitence in his son, now observed with much satisfaction a decided change in his conduct, and took every opportunity of encouraging him in his inquiries, and of directing him to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

He continued to attend the ministry of the Rev. Mr. R., and by slow degrees he was directed into the knowledge and love of God, till at length he abandoned for ever his free-masonry pursuits, and became a free man in Christ Jesus.

Convinced of the value of his own soul, he now began to feel an ardent desire for the salvation of others. The spiritual welfare of his relatives was the first object that occupied his mind, and he prayed the Lord that he would make him instrumental in their conversion. He commenced the work with his wife; and upon declaring to her what the Lord had done for his soul, and expressing his anxiety that she should become partaker of the like precious faith, he was both surprised and delighted to find that the Spirit of God had been secretly working upon her soul, and that through the pious example of her father-in-law she had become solicitous about the one thing

needful. Mrs. C., previous to her arrival in England, was a perfect stranger to family devotion; she was, therefore, as much astonished as her husband to hear her father-in-law expound the Scriptures and engage in prayer. Being, however, a woman of discernment, she was not long in discovering how much his conduct was influenced and his happiness promoted by his religion; and how superior were the order and devotion observed in the family of her husband's relatives, to the scenes of mirth and irregularity she had witnessed in her own. She reflected that if such holiness of life was required for a participation in the joys of heaven, she was unfit for that blissful state, and consequently, unprepared to die. The thought much distressed her mind, and she began to inquire what she must do to be saved. The exhortations of her husband, therefore, were listened to with the greatest interest and profit, and she soon afterwards gave evident proofs by her holy life and conversation, that she had become a partaker with him of the grace of life.

His attention was next directed to his wife's relatives, who were then in Ireland with their regiment. He wrote several letters to them expressing his deep interest in their spiritual

welfare, informing them of the Lord's gracious dealings towards him, and earnestly exhorting them to renounce the vanities of the world and embrace the truth as it is in Jesus. But here he had little success; his words appeared to them like idle tales, and they believed them not. His old companions in arms shared much of his anxious solicitude. He had become so zealous for the Lord that he thought if he could only join the 39th regiment again, he should be enabled, by the blessing of God upon his exertions, to convert the whole of the men. So far did his zeal carry him, that he actually wrote to his father-in-law, who was a corporal in the regiment, to know if he would use his influence to get him appointed to his former station in the regiment; but as it was afterwards understood that it would shortly be ordered to embark for Gaudaloupe, the design was abandoned.

After remaining in his father's house a few months, he thought it advisable to remove. He therefore took apartments in Goswell street, St. Luke's, where he continued to follow the business of a tailor; and becoming acquainted with some young persons, who, like himself, had lately been called to the knowledge of the truth, he instituted a daily prayer-meeting at

his own residence, and thereby his spiritual strength was continually renewed and invigorated.

He had not been long in his new abode before he began to experience severe trials. The winter was setting in; employment was scarce; his little stock of money was expended, and he became extremely straitened in his circumstances. His difficulties, however, did not impede his usefulness; for about this time the Lord was pleased to bless his endeavors in the conversion of two lodgers in the house where he resided. One of them deserves a particular notice. She was a woman of very bad character, and a great persecutor of the children of God. He often spoke to her upon the sinfulness of the human heart, and the necessity of regeneration; but she evinced such an opposition to serious conversation, that it was extremely difficult to prevail on her for one moment to listen to a word of exhortation. While they were singing hymns at the prayer-meeting, she would frequently endeavor to interrupt them by singing immoral songs. One day she appeared more friendly than ordinary towards Mr. C., and invited him and his wife to take tea with her. He consented, though with some reluctance, it being Sabbath

day. While at tea he introduced the subject of religion, and spoke of the sovereignty of God in calling sinners by his grace from a state of nature to a state of holiness. The words *called* by his grace, entered into her very soul. She became thoughtful, but at that time said little. At night she retired to rest, but could not sleep; conviction darted into her mind, and she became extremely restless and uneasy, and at length cried out, "I am lost! I am not *called!*" She started from her bed, and in the utmost agony of soul cried aloud, "O, what shall I do to be saved!" Mr. C. and his wife, hearing her bitter cries, arose and went to her to comfort her; but she refused all consolation, crying for the forgiveness of her sins. She remained in this condition four days, and on Thursday evening Mr. C. took her with him to hear the Rev. Mr. Clark in Redcross street, Cripplegate. His text was from Ezek. 37: 12. "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Under this sermon light broke in upon her soul, and she henceforth became a meek and humble follower of the Saviour. She soon afterwards, with Mr. and Mrs. C., joined the church in Bar-

bican, under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Towers.

Shortly after this, Mr. Cranfield was honored in being made instrumental in the conversion of a poor woman residing at Dowgate Hill. This person was far advanced in years, and, although not an open blasphemer, she had lived in the constant neglect of the means of grace. Being now laid on a bed of affliction, Mr C. visited her, at the request of a friend, and found her totally ignorant of her spiritual danger, and the way of salvation by Christ. He explained to her the awful bondage under which she was held, and pointed her to the Saviour, who, by the Holy Spirit, could bring her into the liberty of the gospel. She at first evinced much opposition, but he was unwearied in his efforts to instruct her and bring her to Jesus. He wept, and prayed, and exhorted by turns, and the Lord in due time gave testimony to the word of his grace, by sealing it upon her heart, and enabling her to see the infinite value of the Saviour, and to commit her eternal interests into his hands. She frequently repeated the words, "I am carnal, sold under sin; but thanks be to God who giveth me the victory through Jesus Christ my Lord." Just before her death, she ex-

pressed great thankfulness for the daily visits of Mr. C., and exhorted him to persevere in his endeavors to win sinners to Christ. This was indeed a brand plucked out of the burning. The Lord met with her at the eleventh hour, and so communicated his love to her soul, that she died triumphing in him, and saying, "None but Christ, none but Christ."

Upon joining the church in Barbican, he was introduced to a number of young friends, who feared the Lord greatly. He attended their prayer-meetings, and found those seasons to be indeed times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. His soul was now fired with zeal for the glory of God, and he became impatient to be more actively employed in his service. When passing Moorfields, and reflecting on this subject, he remembered that when he was a boy he stood upon that spot, listening to the overpowering eloquence of the Rev. George Whitefield, as he boldly preached Jesus and the resurrection; and this passage of Scripture came into his mind, "Go thou and do likewise." He was conscious that he did not possess ability for such an undertaking, and yet it was highly important that the standard of the cross should be erected in the highways and hedges. Who, thought he, can I

get to be the standard-bearer? This difficulty was soon solved, for he very soon after met with Mr. George Taylor, an old playfellow, who had become pious, and whom the Lord had endowed with a talent for preaching. The subject was proposed for his consideration, and it was finally agreed that Mr. Taylor should take his stand under the wall of the vinegar-yard, City road, while Mr. Cranfield should officiate as clerk.

On the following Sabbath afternoon, Mr. C. carried his chair to the place agreed upon, and his friend boldly preached the glad tidings of salvation to the assembled multitude. Here they endured much insult. Field-preaching was not then protected by the civil authorities, as it is now; consequently the multitude were unawed by the fear of punishment, and vented their spleen or indulged their humor as they listed. Sometimes there was laughing, scoffing, and disturbance by throwing mud, but they were not thus to be beaten off the field; their zeal was only stimulated by such opposition, and they went more resolutely forward to the help of the Lord against the mighty. These services were continued for about twelve months, Mr. Cranfield sometimes conducting the services in the absence of his friend. His

heart was now lifted up in the ways of God, but this did not very long continue, when he was greatly distressed, and even left to doubt of his own eternal election. He could obtain no comfortable evidence that he had any faith in Christ, or that he was moving one step in the narrow way, while he was pointing out the way to others. In this desponding condition, he one day strolled to the Tabernacle, just as the song of praise concluded, and heard a discourse from the Rev. Mr. Medley, from Mat. 7: 7. "Search and ye shall find." The word came home with power to his soul. It appeared so suitable to his state, that he felt it to be evidently a message of God to him; he was enabled to seek and to find the Saviour to the joy and the rejoicing of his heart. "The Lord brought him up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock, and established his goings." The remembrance of this goodness was ever afterwards cherished by him, and to the last years of his life, he never ceased to speak of it with lively gratitude.

This incident afforded him much instruction, as he was enabled thereby to see more clearly his own weakness, and the excellency and power of the gospel, the necessity of prayer that he might be kept humble. He was also

led to discern the depth of Satan's devices, and the deceitfulness and depravity of his own heart, and thus to become better qualified to edify and comfort those who should be called to pass through similar scenes of trial.

In August, 1786, his family was increased by the birth of a second child, a daughter, and his business being brisker, his circumstances were considerably improved, but he was again plunged in difficulties, by a fire which broke out in the premises where he resided, which occasioned him a considerable loss.

This new trial only served to draw him nearer to God, and he was enabled to say, from happy experience, "The Lord is my portion, I shall not want."

The year 1787 ushered in fresh afflictions. His first born, a son, then between two and three years old, a child of great promise, whom he most tenderly loved, took the small pox, and after a short illness, died. His feelings upon this occasion are recorded in the following extract of a letter, addressed some years afterwards, to a female friend, suffering under a similar bereavement.

"From the great concern I have for you, in your present troubles, I write, not that I

think it in my power to give you better advice than those who are about you; no, for I feel my inability, and much more my unworthiness to address you; but having trodden the same road before, I can tell you my experience, and the comfort I have received from the Lord, and perhaps he may bless it to you.

"About eight years since, as I was walking from Islington to the city, I fell into a train of meditation upon God, and the things of eternity, when I became filled with such an exalted view of his character, that it was impossible for me to express. Finding God so near, I was very bold and spoke to him of things to come. After giving up myself, wife and children to him, the thought started in my mind, suppose God should make your son an object of his displeasure, can you give him up? I inwardly answered, yes, most heartily, so that God's name might be glorified thereby, and it were for the good of his people. In this frame of mind I continued for more than an hour. Soon afterwards, God tried me; my son fell sick, and it pleased the Lord to take him from me. I was tormented with the apprehension that my child would be lost. My heart rebelled. Upon entering the room where the corpse lay, and uncovering it immediately, I had

such a view of his soul's being in glory, that I sprang from the bed to the window and cried out, Lord Jesus, take me, also. I cannot describe the glorious sight I was then permitted to behold. I saw, by faith, my child conducted by angels through assembled multitudes, and placed before the throne. I stood for sometime before the window, lost in love and admiration. O, that Jesus would give you such a sight. Thus the Lord was pleased to comfort his servant under this trial, and thus, also, has he been able to comfort others 'by the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God.'"

The year 1789 was one of peculiar suffering, owing to the almost total stagnation of business. His children frequently cried for bread, when he had none to give them. The distress of mind, under such circumstances, can only be conceived by those who have endured similar trials; but he was enabled to wrestle hard with God, in prayer, and he found him faithful to his word of promise,—"Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." Sometimes, when his own mind was filled with doubts and fears, his affectionate wife would inspire him with fresh confidence, by bidding

him to remember the goodness of the Lord to them in former days, and would repeat to him those sweet lines of the poet:—

"His love in times past, forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

In April, 1789, he was called to witness the death of his little daughter, of near three years of age. Although so very young, she appeared to have given her heart to God, and her death bed was instructive to all who saw her. By her engaging manners and sweet disposition, she had so entwined herself around the heart of her father, that she seemed quite indispensable to his happiness. The caution of a celebrated preacher now seemed necessary; "Beware of idols in white frocks."

The death of this child inflicted a deep wound in the heart of the father, so that for some days he could not attend to business; he afterwards was enabled to see the wisdom of divine Providence, and to bow submissively to his heavenly Father's will.

As Mr. and Mrs. Cranfield were industrious and prudent, they could make a little go further than many others, so that few knew from their

appearance how narrow their circumstances frequently were; their father being much afflicted, could render them but little aid; but whenever that little was afforded, it was received with a grateful heart.

About this time, passing through Kingsland, Mr. C. was struck with the ignorance and wickedness which abounded in that neighborhood, and consulted with some Christian friends upon the best mode of introducing the gospel there. After much consideration, it was agreed that a prayer meeting should be held among the brick-makers. Mr. C. accordingly, applied to the foreman, who readily opened his house for the purpose. This meeting was held every morning, at five o'clock, and once a week, in the evening, and Mr. C. was rarely absent on those occasions.

Towards the close of this year, being unable, notwithstanding every exertion, to pay a note which he owed, he was arrested and placed in the debtor's prison, in Giltspur street. This was to him as great a trial as any which he had previously passed through, as it cast a shade over his character, but his heart did not reproach him, and he trusted in God, leaning upon his promise, "I will be with thee." But for the two following days, he

was dejected, and the distress of mind was brought to a climax, on hearing that his landlord had put an execution into his house for rent. He cried unto the Lord, and found comfort to his troubled mind by the precious assurance, "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee." He remained in prison about four days, when, through the assistance of a friend, the money was paid and Mr. C. obtained a discharge. Soon after his return home, finding it impossible to meet the just demands of his landlord, the few articles of furniture which he possessed were taken, and having resolved to leave the house where he had suffered so many trials, he went forth, like Abraham, not knowing whither he went.

Though cast down, he was not in despair. His faith and hope in God still abounded, and the Lord, who was now leading him by a way which he knew not, was present to help him. As he was passing along the streets with his wife and child, he remembered that it was the evening for prayer, at Kingsland, and thither he bent his steps. His friends, who had heard of his trouble, received him with great joy, and most fervently invoked the blessing of God on him and his family. After the meeting was over, one of the company invited him

home, and told him he was at liberty to take up his residence with him until he could find another situation. This offer he gladly accepted, and remained with him that night, but the next day he took lodgings on Kingsland Green, although he had no furniture, save what he could borrow of his friends.

Such were the trying scenes through which this afflicted man was called to pass, and which compelled him to repair for a shelter to Kingsland. But affliction cometh not forth of the dust; there was one above, who was secretly directing the storm, and rendering it subservient to the performance of his designs of mercy; and his purpose being accomplished, of placing his servant in this neighborhood, where he intended to make him instrumental in spreading the light of the gospel, the storm soon after gradually began to subside, the clouds to disperse, and the horizon to brighten, indicating the approach of a calmer and happier day.

CHAPTER III.

FROM HIS REMOVAL TO KINGSLAND, TO HIS QUITTING THE LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.

On the first day of taking up his abode in his new place of residence, Mr. Cranfield spent much time in prayer, that the Lord would again appear in his behalf, and bless his endeavors to gain a subsistence for himself and family. On the following morning, he received an order from a gentleman, for a suit of clothes. This order, however, he could not immediately execute, as he did not possess a single shilling wherewith to purchase the cloth. He waited, therefore, upon the gentleman and informed him of his circumstances, who advanced him two guineas to purchase the materials, when he and his wife commenced their work with extraordinary diligence. He did not retire to rest until they were completed, which occupied him two whole nights and three days. Fresh orders now came in; his business gradually increased; and at the end of a few weeks he was again in a prosperous state; still his mind was kept in constant

anxiety in consequence of some former debts, which, from losses and disappointments, he had been unable to discharge. A few extracts from his diary, which he commenced on new year's day, will show his feelings and experience, whilst struggling against these pecuniary difficulties.

"*Jan.* 1*st*, 1790.—'Trust in the Lord at all times.' Ps. 42: 8. This lesson I would learn at all times, and in all situations. Lord, make me a good scholar this year, I beseech thee. I begin the year in circumstances of great perplexity and trial, having eleven pounds to pay on the 4th inst., without one shilling towards it. But I trust in my God, who is my strength and my helper. Lord, help me to put all my confidence in thee. I have committed myself into the hands of my heavenly Father this day, in his house, feeling and believing that he has accepted me for Jesus' sake.

"*2nd.*—'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.' Ps. 37: 5. This day I have been much tried with disappointments and crosses, but am kept from sinking. His arms are underneath me, supporting and comforting me under this trial.

—No eleven pounds yet.—Lord, keep me patient.

"*3d.*—'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.' Ps. 4: 22. I have been enabled, in some measure, to do so. I regret that I have been disquieted, and have not kept this Sabbath as I could have wished; but the Lord has been pleased to afford me a little of the light of his countenance. Blessed be his name for ever. No money as yet.—The time is up to-morrow morning, and I doubt not but my God will appear for me. In this confidence I lay my body down to sleep.

"*4th.*—'The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear.' Ps. 27: 1. This morning the Lord has made bare his arm, and sent me the eleven pounds, which I have stood in such need of. Glory be to his name for ever. The Lord alone delivered me. All hearts are in his hand, and he hath the whole disposal of them; consequently, his children have no reason to fear. 'In God will I make my boast all the day long.' "

The writer of this memoir is not aware in what way this seasonable supply was obtained, nor was he at all conscious that this interesting record of the goodness of God was in existence, until after the death of its author.

"*5th.*—'And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." Ep. 1: 19. Nothing short of the power of God can make me believe; and something of this power I have experienced this day, as evidently as the children of Israel did, when the Red Sea was dried up before them. I stood in need of a guinea, and the Lord in a surprising manner sent it to me at the time I most wanted it. Blessed be his name, he has never left me yet."

The guinea to which he here alludes, he used often afterwards to speak of to his family, with great animation and lively feelings of gratitude. It was put into the hand of one of his children, by an elderly lady, who visited him that day, and who was proverbial for her extreme parsimony. Though possessed of wealth, she denied herself the common necessaries, and was never known to perform so benevolent an act before. Under such circumstances, Mr. C. might well observe the hand of God in affording this most seasonable relief.

"*25th.*—'As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.' Mat. 8: 13. This day I

have set to my seal that God is true. I have a note to pay this day, for which I had not sufficient money, and the Lord has sent me five guineas to pay it with. Blessed be his name, I never trusted in him and was confounded. He is a friend in the worst of times, and we may put confidence in him, and be assured he will not leave us. I find my soul overcome in admiration of the love of God. Blessed be his name that I ever knew him."

This seasonable and repeated relief left a deep impression on his mind, and he often afterwards spoke of it in the family circle, to excite in his children a dependence on God for a supply of all their necessities.

Upon reviewing the distressing situation out of which he had been brought, he writes in his journal:

"*Feb.* 19*th.*—I have labored for several weeks past, under a great deal of affliction, both in body and mind. My soul has been nearly overwhelmed with sorrows, but God was with me and was my strength and my stay. I never had my faith more tried. An evidence of personal piety in such a time is worth more than gold. I have this day given myself up

into my Father's hands, and surrendered my body, soul, tongue and pen, all I have, and all I am, to his service; I freely devote myself to him, living and dying. Amen."

Notwithstanding the difficulties that beset him, Mr. Cranfield was every morning employed at prayer meetings with the brick-makers, and in the midst of frost and snow, he was accustomed to go round and wake up his friends, that the place might be full. Soon the apartment which they occupied was too small for their accommodation. Being unwilling that any should be shut out, he hired a larger one, called the Factory, and although embarrassed in his circumstances, he became responsible for the rent. He then engaged his friend, Mr. George Taylor, to attend and preach, while he officiated as clerk. The little band soon increased, and notwithstanding the obloquy and ridicule they encountered from the inhabitants, who gave them the name of "Devil-dodgers," they were joined by several gentlemen of influence and respectability. Other meetings were attended at various houses, and the Lord added to their numbers daily.

In his visits from house to house, having witnessed much severe distress among the sick

poor, he drew up a plan for the formation of a benevolent society, for the purpose of more regularly visiting and relieving the necessitous at their own houses, he himself acting as secretary. In the first year of the society, the sum of nearly £30 was distributed among distressed individuals, in weekly sums of from one to three shillings.

Towards the middle of this year, Mr. Cranfield's circumstances assumed a favorable aspect, and he was enabled to disengage himself from the difficulties with which he was surrounded. No memorandum, however, is given of his experience till September 28th, when he thus writes:—

"To my shame, I have not written of God's dealings towards me since February last. In this great interval, I have had to ascribe glory to God, for he has been my help and stay. I have paid most of the money which in February I owed; and in a little time, by Divine assistance, I shall pay all. I have had much of the presence of my God during this interval, and have been supported and comforted by a glorious promise which he has given me, 'The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed on the earth, and thou

wilt not deliver him to the will of his enemies.' I can truly say he has fulfilled that promise to me. He still blesses me, and keeps me alive in my soul. I therefore will trust in him, and not fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, for the God of Jacob is my refuge. I have set out afresh this day, with a determination to give no occasion of offence, either to my soul or to man, and in the strength of God to live to his glory."

Whilst residing at Kingsland, Mr. C. used frequently to attend the Tabernacle, and Blackfriars' church; and under the ministry of the word at those places, he greatly increased in knowledge and spirituality. At times, the gospel came with such power to his soul, that he could scarcely refrain from giving utterance to his feelings in the midst of the congregation. It was, no doubt, after experiencing some such time of refreshing, that he wrote the following:—

"*Oct. 5th.*—I have this night been at the Tabernacle, and am refreshed. I see more and more the awful nature of sin; that it is infinite. I see that I am polluted all over,—that there is no soundness in me. I see that I

come infinitely short of God's word. I feel that I am a wretch undone. I think I never breathed after holiness more than I do at this time. I want to be made like Christ, in every sense of the word,—in heart, in lip and in life. I feel, by experience, that through frequent secret prayer, sin is mortified, and my mind is made more holy and heavenly. This, also, gives me a distaste for every thing that is sinful. Lord, keep me in this frame. I lay me down this night with a firm desire to be holy, as God is holy. May Jesus sanctify me. Amen."

The following week he thus writes:—

"*Oct. 12th.*—The Lord has given me this day some delightful discoveries of himself, as my Saviour and friend. O, the glories which I see in Christ! glories that far excel every description. He has enabled me, also, to see much of myself. I hate my sins with perfect hatred. The Lord has led me, this day, much into the knowledge of his word. O, what a precious treasure it is. I really esteem it more than my daily food. O, that I could live more to his praise. Lord, make me any thing, so that I may live to thy glory. If it is thy will, make me so poor as to be obliged to lie

upon straw, and to clothe myself with rags, and have nothing but a hard crust for my food, and a little water, if it be but the means of bringing me nearer to thyself, and of preventing me from becoming a scandal to thy holy cause. Give me a love for precious souls, and a heart to visit and relieve the poor. Lord, grant me this, for Christ's sake. Amen."

At this time his Bible was his constant companion,—he always had it with him on the shop-board while at work, and would read a small portion, and then meditate upon it while he pursued his occupation. This exercise was so delightful to him, that he has frequently declared that it was a grief for him to leave it only for a few minutes for the purpose of taking his meals. No wonder, then, that he dived so deeply into the mysteries of the gospel, and had such debasing views of himself. On the 14th of October, he thus writes:—

"'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant.' Blessed be my covenant God, he is always found of them that seek him; I can say so by experience; he communes from off his mercy-seat with such sinners as I am. This morning,

when I was at the throne of grace, he led me much into myself. It is impossible for heart to conceive what creatures we are by nature, —what a depth of iniquity lodges within our breast. What reason have we to fear ourselves; Solomon spake truth when he said, 'He that trusts his own heart, is a fool.' I see that nothing but destruction lodges within me; I am entirely an enemy to myself, and am not capable of doing any good thing. O, what reason, then, have I to give myself up to God, to be guided by Him who alone can guide me aright to heaven; and how seldom do I give up myself in reality. I must first be convinced that I cannot guide myself, before I can ever give myself to be guided by another. Secondly, I must count the cost. Sometimes it is necessary that I should be deprived of earthly goods, in order to wean my affection from the world. Sometimes a child must be taken away,—sometimes I must be in debt, and people sent to harass me for their money, —sometimes there must be sickness,—and at others, imprisonment. We stand in need of some cross or other, in order that our souls may be made meet for heaven. O, what a mercy it is that God will have any thing to do with us at all. Then let me never murmur

at any cross he is pleased to put on me? May I cheerfully take it up, and go on my way rejoicing."

Though Mr. C. was now in more prosperous circumstances, so active and benevolent was his disposition, that he never could be induced to save money, even when he had the opportunity. He was now a constant visiter of the sick poor, and, frequently coming in contact with objects suffering in all the varieties of wretchedness, his hand and his heart were always open for their relief.

Oftentimes his benefactions were so distributed, that the recipient knew not from what quarter the supply proceeded. One Saturday, at the early meeting, he was informed that a pious man, one of the fruits of his labors, had not, through poverty, tasted any meat for several months. At night, therefore, he purchased a leg of mutton; and having tied it to the knocker of the poor man's door, he gave a loud knock, and ran away. On the following morning, after the conclusion of the meeting, that individual related what had happened, and, expressing his fears that some evil was designed against him, asked for advice as to what he had better do with the meat. Every one counselled him to eat it; but it was not till

after Mr. Cranfield had repeatedly assured him he would be responsible for his conduct, that the poor man was prevailed upon to do so.

At the close of the year, Mr. C , through his connexion with Messrs. Reyner, Burchett, and other respectable individuals, had such an influx of business, that he deemed it advisable to take two apprentices; and in the year following, another was added to their number. But this change in his affairs produced little alteration in his general conduct, except that it rendered him more extensively useful. He had no love for money, and only valued it as the means of providing for the wants of his family, and of enabling him more effectually to obey the apostolic direction to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

The weather now began to set in very cold, employment was scarce, and the poor inhabitants, especially the brickmakers, were invery great distress. Mr. Cranfield, therefore, began to consider how relief could best be afforded them. After various things had been suggested to his mind, he at length drew up a plan for raising subscriptions, and purchasing articles of consumption, and retailing them to the poor at very reduced prices. After the

five o'clock prayer-meeting, on New Year's morning, 1791, was concluded, Mr. C. read his plan to the persons present. It was a very full meeting, and it was approved of by all. Mr. Reyner immediately put his name down for two guineas, others subscribed one. Each gave what he could afford, and then Mr. C. went round the neighborhood to raise contributions from among the inhabitants. By the evening he had collected upwards of £20, which he placed in the hands of Mr. Reyner, who acted as treasurer; and that benevolent gentleman then collected to the amount of £50 more. The first thing they did was to purchase coals, which were then 2*s.* 3*d*, per bushel, and a supply of twenty chaldrons was obtained, and deposited in a gentleman's coach-house, the use of which had been obtained for the occasion. Mr. Cranfield was here to be seen every morning with his apron on, busily employed in serving out the coals at sixpence per bushel, tickets for which had previously been obtained. Bread and other necessary articles were provided; and the miseries of the poor, during the whole of the winter, were greatly alleviated. Through the activity of friends, contributions poured in abundantly from all quarters, so that when the frost broke

up, Mr. Reyner had £50 in hand, ready for the next winter. Many of the poor, by these means, were brought to hear the gospel, and several were caught in its net.

About the end of 1791, Mr. Cranfield, in order to facilitate the spread of the gospel among the poor, opened a Sabbath school at his own house, and was assisted in the work by Mr. Gould; while his wife instructed the girls. The number of children soon amounted to sixty; and his room being too small, he removed the school to the factory, where the gospel was preached on the Sabbath.

In the summer, public service was frequently conducted on the open green, in front of Mr. C.'s dwelling; and many were thus brought to hear the gospel who would not have consented to enter into "temples made by hands." In the autumn, application was made to the Rev. Rowland Hill, to preach on the green, which he consented to do, and the multitude that assembled to hear him was truly gratifying. This put new life into the whole party. The zeal of Mr. Reyner, and other affluent friends, was stimulated, and the design was formed of building a new place of worship. Subscriptions were raised for this purpose, and eventually a neat chapel was built near the green.

Shortly after the removal of the school to the Factory, Mr. Cranfield left it in the hands of some Christian friends, and proceeded to Stoke-Newington, where he opened another school, and established a prayer-meeting at a friend's house, named Dennington. At this place he labored for some time, and then resigned it into the hands of other laborers, and opened another at Hornsey.

Here he hired a room in the sexton's house, and commenced a canvass for children. Several attended, and many of the poor inhabitants were brought to hear the gospel. The place being small, it was proposed to assemble the people in the open air. Accordingly, a minister having been provided, the friends were collected together from Kingsland, among whom was Mr. Reyner, and the gospel trumpet was sounded at Hornsey. But no sooner had the minister opened his commission, than the whole village was in an uproar. The inhabitants, headed by a rich merchant, and several persons of influence in the town, came in a body, with kettles, drums, rattles, bells and clubs, making the most discordant sounds; but in spite of this treatment, the preacher still continued his address, and the mob, finding that noise was of little avail, tried the effect of

blows. Some, therefore, went to work with sticks, and others with stones, by which several persons were injured. and the little party was at length beaten out of the village.

But Mr. Cranfield was not a person who could be put down in this way. He was determined that the poor should have the gospel preached to them, therefore, on the following morning, he and his friends proceeded to the police office, in Worship street, and took out warrants against the merchant and other ringleaders of the mob, who were reprimanded by the magistrate; and, as the charge was not pressed, the offenders were dismissed, after having entered into recognizances to keep the peace.

The vicar now sent for the poor sexton, and threatened him with dismissal from his office; he, thereupon, came to Mr. Cranfield, and requested him to remove his school to some other house. With this request Mr. C. complied, and hired a room at the west end of the village, where the school was continued; and the work went on so prosperously, that, eventually, a chapel was built, and a great reformation took place in that benighted neighborhood.

About 1794, the minister at Kingsland

having embraced Arian principles, a division arose in the little church; some of the congregation supported him, but many left, and joined other churches, while a few relapsed into a backsliding state, among whom, it is to be regretted, was the subject of this memoir.

Previous to this time, a society had been formed in London, denominated the "London Corresponding Society," for the avowed purpose of corresponding with the leaders of the French revolution, and of obtaining a reformation of abuses in the state, by other means than those pointed out by the constitution as legitimate. The meetings of this society were occasionally attended by Mr. C., and at length, being enticed by the cry of liberty, he was induced to enrol his name as a member; and, with his characteristic ardor, employed all his energies in promoting the objects of the institution. He delivered lectures upon the liberty of the subject, and published a two-penny pamphlet, consisting of extracts from a work of Dr. Price, entitled, "Observations upon Civil Liberty," which was much applauded by the reform party.

Though Mr. Cranfield had not fallen into open sin, yet, by attending these meetings, he lost his spirituality. His conscience often

accused him, and he frequently resolved to withdraw himself from the connexion; but, by entreaties and persuasions, his resolutions were as often broken. At length his wife (whose heart seemed almost broken at this defection from his religious principles), under the influence of prayer, wrote him a most affectionate letter, and laid it upon his dressing table. On coming home late at night, the neatly folded epistle caught his attention. He opened it; read its contents; and these words were powerfully brought home to his conscience. "My dear husband, can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" Conviction instantly darted into his mind. He stood self-condemned; and the next moment found him on his knees, confessing his transgressions before God, imploring his forgiveness, and begging his assistance in enabling him to lead a new life. These days of darkness he ever afterwards deplored, and the remembrance of them often excited him to deep humiliation and self-abasement. In detailing these circumstances in a letter to a friend, some years afterwards, he says, "False doctrines having been introduced into our church, I contended with the minister, which got me ill-will among the great folks. Disunion took place; some

followed the Wesleyans; the poorer sort joined the congregation at Homerton, under Mr. Eyre; others went to the Tabernacle; and some got into a backsliding state, of which I, to my shame, was one; so that our school was neglected, our prayer-meetings deserted. O, how true is that word, 'When Ephraim was a child, then I loved him.' There was now no preaching on the green; our zeal for souls was abated. Ah me, what a black catalogue presents itself. O, where are those delightful seasons of hearing, praying and Christian conversation?

'What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still.'

"Shall I ever again in this life taste such sweetness in the love of my Saviour, as I then experienced? What greatly added to my distress, was the death of my spiritual guide, the Rev. W. Romaine. O, how my mis-improvement under him, wounded my guilty soul; it was like a dagger. I followed him to the grave with a heart full of sorrow, and was for some time like a sheep which no man took up, wandering far from the fold."

After passing a restless night, occasioned by the tender reproof of his wife, so judiciously

administered, he arose from his bed with a fixed determination of never again being seen in the camp of the enemy; and after much time spent in prayer and self-abasement, he wrote and signed the following affecting document:—

"Wednesday, 19th June, 1794.

"It is high time to awake out of sleep."

"I, Thomas Cranfield, have given a most awful proof of apostasy from God for near three months. My conscience has been much burdened on account of it, but to no purpose, because I did not watch. I am this day determined to set about a reformation; but, alas, unless God lay hold of me, I am undone; for the work alone must be by him; therefore, I hope, by his Spirit, to look to him for strength, in the first place, to break off my sins that beset me. And O, that God would help me in this great work! The next thing, to come out from the world. Lord, lay hold on me, as thou didst upon Lot, for I linger. The next thing, to neglect no known duty,—family or secret prayer. The next thing, to attend more to my business. And the next thing, to spend but little money. This is the way I mean to set out to work:—First of all, to beg God's blessing on the work; second, to start back at

the appearance of evil, and cry to God for strength against it; third, to break off all worldly company; fourth, to pray as soon as I am out of bed,—at breakfast with my family, at noon by myself,—in the evening with my family, afterwards by myself; fifth, to give all diligence to my business, and not to spend my time idly in the least. And now, Lord, help me. O, my Saviour, Jesus, be present with me in this great work, and thou shalt have the glory.

"Signed in the presence of God, and in his fear. THOMAS CRANFIELD."

Thus the Lord again delivered his servant from the snare of the fowler, through the affectionate solicitude and fervent prayers of the devoted partner of his days. Who does not admire such a mode of administering reproof? Here open rebuke and loud declamation would have entirely failed; but a soft tongue breaketh the bone; and a few lines of gentle remonstrance, indited under the influence of prayer, and sweetened by the most tender affection, reclaim the wanderer, and bring him back to the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

CHAPTER IV.

FROM HIS QUITTING THE LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCIETY, TO THE OPENING OF THE MINT SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

When the Christian once lays down the weapons of his spiritual warfare, and suffers himself to be taken captive by the enemy of souls, how difficult is his return to the Captain of his salvation! By what slow degrees does he obtain that confidence in God, and that assurance of faith, which he once possessed! Like Pilgrim when he lost his roll, how many bitter reflections and achings of heart are the result, before he again recovers the evidence of his sonship, and can "read his title clear to mansions in the skies!" The truth of this observation was severely felt by the subject of this memoir, who accordingly, on the day after he had signed his solemn resolution of future amendment, thus writes:—

"Thursday, 19th June, 1794.

"This day I have neglected family prayer, and my mind is much clouded; but I hope God will help me against sin and the tempter's in-

fluence. The Lord has promised strength; I have sought it by secret prayer; and I hope, notwithstanding all, that I shall have it. In the evening somewhat refreshed by hearing Mr. Wildbore. May the truth have a lasting impression. Amen.

"Friday.—Somewhat more comfortable in my mind, but dare not as yet call God my Father."

From this time to the close of the year 1796, Mr. Cranfield made no efforts worthy of notice to spread the Redeemer's kingdom. His faith continuing weak, through the temporary suspension of that spiritual agency, from which, alone, it derives all its vigor and activity, he feared to commence any fresh operations against the powers of darkness, lest, in an evil hour, he should again bring discredit on the cause he still loved, and wished to serve. This period he ever afterwards considered as a blank in his existence, and the loss of those precious months he ever deplored as a misimproved opportunity, of which he should have to render a solemn account.

About the commencement of 1797, he removed to Hoxton, and attended the ministry of that celebrated divine, the Rev. Robert

Simpson, at the little chapel adjoining the academy, where he for sometime officiated as clerk. Here he became acquainted with several of the students, among whom, were the Rev. Dr. Morrison of China, George Clayton, George Collison, Hartnell, James, and Kent; most of whom, afterwards, assisted him in his renewed attempts to win souls to Christ. He also frequently attended the week-night services at the Tabernacle, and, by degrees, regained that spirituality of mind, that love for the sacredc Sriptures, and that ardent zeal for the glory of God, and the welfare of souls, for which he had been so eminently distinguished. He was, also, greatly edified by the preaching of the Rev. John Berridge. That excellent man, when in town, had a class of young men, who used to meet him one morning in the week, before breakfast, and at these meetings, Mr. C. was a constant attendant. It happened on one occasion, that Mr. Cranfield was more than usually anxious for a word of exhortation, but to his great disappointment, the reverend gentleman continued to call on the young men, in continued succession, to engage in prayer. "More prayer," he said, at the close of each petition. "We cannot have too much prayer;" and thus they were occupied till the time had

arrived for separation. Before, however, he closed the meeting, Mr. Berridge addressed them as follows:—"My dear young friends, I wish to impress upon all your minds the necessity and importance of prayer. Never leave your room in the morning, without spending a few minutes in this holy and delightful exercise. You must know, I am very fond of a garden, and take much pleasure in rearing flowers. One day a friend of mine sent me a beautiful flower, of which I was anxious to preserve the seed. On a fine summer's morning I arose early for this purpose; and so intent were my thoughts upon the subject, that I went out into my garden without prayer: but what was my surprise and disapointment, when I saw a sparrow just flying away with the last remaining portion of seed! Vexed at this incident, I said in my mind, 'What! am I not to have a flower, Lord?' My negligence was then brought to remembrance, and I inwardly replied, 'No, John, you do not deserve it, you thought more about your flower, than about prayer.'" This little anecdote made a strong impression on the mind of Mr. Cranfield, and he often related it, in his latter days, for the encouragement and edification of others.

Soon after his taking up his residence at

Hoxton, his mind was much distressed by the abounding vice and immorality which he witnessed in every part of London, and he began to consider what could be done towards stemming this torrent of wickedness. Whilst reflecting on the subject, he cast his eye on a pamphlet which he had formerly published for the London Corresponding Society; and the thought occured to him, that "it would be best to fight Satan with his own weapons." He, therefore, called upon his friend Mr. Burchett; and after prayer for direction, it was agreed that a religious tract should be printed, and gratuitously distributed by them in the streets of London and its vicinity. The task of drawing up and printing this tract, Mr. B. took upon himself. It was agreed that the title of it should be "Palm Sunday," and that one thousand copies should be struck off. This being the first religious tract which is known to have been printed for gratuitous circulation in London, a part of the interesting document is here inserted.

"ON PALM SUNDAY.

"And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way."—Matt. 21: 8.

"It being the practice of multitudes in London, to go out on this day for the purpose

gathering palm, and it being considered that most of such persons thus act, merely from custom, or from the sensual gratification arising from a pleasant walk, the following hints are suggested, in hope that they may lead the minds of some, at least, to that great and glorious Being, whose entrance into Jerusalem is, alas, ignorantly commemorated by the practice alluded to.

"The history of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem will be found in the 21st of Matthew, 11th of Mark, 19th of Luke, and 12th of St. John.

"Compare your conduct with that of the disciples here mentioned. Are you rejoicing and praising God for the mighty works which he hath done? Are your minds in contemplation of that Jesus, who, although he was Lord of all, yet came down from heaven to proclaim peace to a lost world. Men and brethren, be wise; consider your ways. It is a solemn fact, that ere-long, your eyes will be closed upon the beautiful scene that now surrounds you, and your souls will be hurried into the presence of God.

"You cannot doubt but that, as spirits, you were created for the glory of God, who is the Father of spirits. Sin has, however, so

changed you, that you are now seeking happiness in breaking the Sabbath, a day appointed by Jesus for holy worship. Will your present pursuits abate the sting of a guilty conscience? Will the reflection of Sabbath-days spent in indolence and pleasure, make dying easy? Remember, you are still on praying ground, and within the reach of mercy. God waits to be gracious. He has sent his Son to die for sinners, such as you are. Fly, then, to him, and begin a life of reading and hearing the word of God—of meditation and prayer—enjoying the peace which flows from reconciliation with God, through the atonement of Jesus: and thus you will be happy here, and infinitely so hereafter. But O, trifle not with your souls, or with the concerns of eternity, nor suffer this friendly admonition to lose its effect or to rise against you another day. 'Time is on the wing!' Judgment is rapidly advancing. 'Prepare to meet your God.'

'HYMN.

'Hosanna to the royal Son
Of David's ancient line;
His natures two, his person one—
Mysterious and divine.

The root of David, here we find,
And offspring, is the same—

Eternity and time are joined
In our Immanuel's name.

Blest he that comes to wretched men
With peaceful news from heaven;
Hosannas of the highest strain
To Christ the Lord be given.

Let mortals ne'er refuse to take
Th' hosannas on their tongues;
Lest rocks and stones should rise and break
Their silence into songs.'"

On Palm Sunday morning, 1797, the two friends met at Shoreditch Church, for the purpose of commencing the circulation of these tracts; Mr. Burchett took the road towards Hornsey; and Mr. Cranfield that towards Whitechapel. After distributing them in this direction, Mr. C. returned through Thames-street, and crossing over the bridge, proceeded to Rotherhithe. Here he was struck with the awful scenes of depravity which every where presented themselves; and he immediately formed the resolution of forthwith opening a Sabbath school in this abandoned neighborhood. In the middle of the week, therefore, he again visited it, hired a room in Adam street, and issued a circular, informing the inhabitants that a school would be opened on the following Sabbath for gratuitous instruction. On Easter

Sunday, therefore, Mr. C. commenced the work of instruction, when upwards of twenty scholars attended. At this time he had three children living; and as he could not obtain any other assistant, his wife attended the school with him every Sabbath, though with an infant at her breast; Mr. C. carried another child in his arms; and the third was left at home with a female servant. They dined in the school-room, and returned home in the afternoon to tea. The number of children increasing to upwards of one hundred, Mr. C. applied to Thomas Wilson, Esq. for assistance, who gave him a recommendatory letter to some ministers; but the only help he could obtain was the privilege of being allowed to take the children to the Rev. John Townsend's chapel, Jamaica Row, for public worship.

About this time, infidelity appeared to be at its height, and many cheap, blasphemous publications, consisting of extracts from the works of Thomas Paine and Voltaire, were freely circulated. These publications were commonly known by the name of "Pigs' Meat." At the shop where these infidel tracts were sold, was a kind of box for the reception of communications from correspondents, and this box was called the "Pig Trough"—a truly fit appellation for the reception of such productions.

In order to divert the appetite of the reading public from such unwholesome and disgusting food, Mr. Cranfield, by the advice of Mr. Burchett, wrote a pamphlet, entitled, "Select Sayings of the Rev. William Romaine," which sayings Mr. C. had taken down at Blackfriars' and St. Dunstan's Churches. The manuscript, when completed, was submitted to Dr. Simpson; and he having approved of it, one thousand copies were immediately printed and circulated at Mr. C.'s expense. Of these, five hundred were distributed gratis, and the remainder were sold at the doors of the Tabernacle, Tottenham Court Road, and Surrey Chapels, at one penny each. He afterwards distributed in a similar manner one thousand copies of the Rev. William Romaine's Sermon on the 107th Psalm; and at a subsequent period he published an "Address to the Rising Generation." This practice, however, he discontinued, upon the formation of the Religious Tract Society in 1799.

The Sabbath school, at Rotherhithe, went on prosperously, and the Lord was pleased to bless the instruction in a remarkable manner to several of the children. One of these, a little girl, was called to her rest about nine months after the opening of the school. Mr.

Cranfield visited her in her illness, and she died, leaving an interesting testimony to the advantages of Sabbath school instruction. Several years afterwards, Mr. C. met a friend in Southwark, who asked him if he did not recollect presenting a youth with a Testament at Rotherhithe Sabbath school, as a reward for learning the Epistle to the Ephesians in one week. Mr. C. replied in the affirmative. "Well," said his friend, "that person is now alive; I saw him the other day, and he informed me of the fact, showing me, at the same time, the Testament you gave him. After he left the school he went to sea, and that Testament has been four voyages with him to the East Indies. He told me that it was the man of his counsel, his chief companion in all his troubles, and that it had been made a great blessing to his soul."

The more Mr. Cranfield engaged in Sabbath school instruction, the more convinced he became of its great importance and utility; and now, being assisted at Rotherhithe by some members of Mr. Townsend's congregation, he, in December, 1797, opened another Sabbath school in a brick-maker's house, near the High Cross, Tottenham. At this place were several youths of most abandoned character, and he

calculated upon receiving much annoyance from them; but, contrary to his expectations, these were among the earliest who applied for admission. At first they were rather unruly, but the firmness of Mr. C., tempered by kindness, soon reduced them to submission. Some of them, as soon as they began to perceive the benefits of instruction, formed the plan of meeting at each other's houses after the labors of the day, for the purpose of learning to read; and to facilitate their progress in this exercise, they obtained the assistance of the boys in the Bible class, for which they allowed them each one penny per week. Four of these ringleaders in wickedness were subsequently called to the knowledge of the truth. Mr. Burchett afterwards obtained a license for public worship in this room, at which some of the students of Hoxton academy were accustomed to preach on the Sabbath evening, among whom were the Rev. George Clayton, and the Rev. Dr. Morrison.

At this time the exertions of Mr. Cranfield were very great. When teachers could be obtained for the Tottenham school, he would sometimes go from his house at Hoxton, to the Rotherhithe school, where the cause, through his absence, had begun to decline;

teach the children till four o'clock in the afternoon, take tea at Hoxton, then accompany the preacher to Tottenham. At the conclusion of the evening service, he would sometimes conduct a prayer-meeting till nine o'clock, and return afterwards to his family at Hoxton.

About the spring of 1798, Miss Dunkin, a member of Mr. Townsend's congregation, undertook the charge of the Rotherhithe school, and afterwards added to it a school of industry for girls.

Being thus freed from the care of this school, Mr. C. directed his whole attention to the one at Tottenham, where he continued to labor with great success till the end of July following, though not without much opposition. Several of the children and adults who attended the school, were employed at the mills of Mr. Pratt, who was considered a man of great authority by the inhabitants of Tottenham, and he now forbade the attendance of all persons in his employ, on pain of being instantly discharged. Mr. C. also experienced much opposition from the parochial authorities, who were continually raising a disturbance at the door, and threatening him with prosecutions for provoking a breach of the peace, and for holding an unlawful assembly. Notwithstand-

ing these annoyances, the work went on prosperously. Such interruptions and intimidations had as little effect in turning him from his purpose, as those he had before experienced under the wall of the Vinegar Yard, and at Hornsey. At length this school, also, was taken off his hands, by some Wesleyans, who subsequently erected a small chapel near the spot. For the present, however, he still continued to attend the evening worship.

Activity being a leading feature of Mr. Cranfield's mind, he was always diligently employed. He could not endure the thought that, in a world filled with sin and misery, he should sit still and look on, without devising methods to benefit those around him; and while souls were perishing for lack of knowledge, he could not forbear exerting himself to the very utmost, in order to communicate the light of truth, by which he had been made wise unto salvation. On resigning the charge of the school at Tottenham, therefore, he consulted with Messrs. Pound and Carter, fellow-members with him of Mr. Towers' congregation, as to what place he should next occupy, with a view to make an attack upon the enemy; when Kent street, Southwark, was proposed as the most eligible spot. He, therefore, took an early opportunity

of reconnoitering this strong hold of the enemy, and found it inhabited by the lowest of the low, and the vilest of the vile. Gipsies, harlots, thieves, and such like characters, were to be met with in almost every house. Of late years this street has not been so notorious as formerly, but at that time, men, women, children, asses, pigs, and dogs, were often found living together in the same room; while swearing, blasphemy, and the most obscene conversation, saluted the ear at almost every door. To use his own words, "It was the very place of dragons." The children appeared in a most deplorable condition, few of them being more than half clad; their matted hair and dirty appearance inducing the supposition that they had scarcely been washed or combed from their birth.

Mr. Cranfield met his friends in the evening, and reported what he had seen, when one exclaimed, "Can any good thing come out of Kent street?" It was deemed advisable, however, to try what could be done, and the next day Mr. C. hired a room at No. 124, at a rent of three shillings per week; and on the first Sabbath in August, 1798, the school was opened. The children attended in considerable numbers, and after he and his friends had instructed them for some time, he ventured to

take them to Collyer's Rents chapel; but it was with the greatest difficulty that he could keep them in order. Scarcely one of them had ever before seen the inside of a chapel; and so rude and uncultivated were they, that when the service was over, and they had got into the street again, they gave three cheers for the minister.

The opposition which he and his friends encountered in visiting and teaching in this district was dreadful. Every species of insult was heaped upon them; they were pelted with filth of all descriptions, and dirty water was frequently thrown out of the windows upon their heads. This treatment cooled the zeal of the two friends, but Mr. Cranfield, nothing intimidated, pushed forward the work with courage and perseverance, and, though alone, he feared not to venture into the dwellings of the most desperate characters, in search of precious souls—

> "Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
> His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal!
> Nor number, nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
> Though single."

Upon the desertion of his helpers, Mr. C., finding it impossible to do the whole of the

work himself, applied to his wife, who, notwithstanding the difficulties and discouragements with which she knew she should have to contend, rather than the cause should be abandoned, readily consented to accompany him. This was no easy task, as she had to travel from Hoxton, a distance of about three miles, leading two children, while her husband carried a third. Nor was this employment of the most pleasant description. The children frequently came so dirty, that the color of their skins could scarcely be ascertained, while their clothes, in many cases, were filled with vermin. In course of time, however, their appearance was greatly improved, and cleanliness was made indispensably necessary to their continuance in the school.

On the approach of winter, the number of children gradually diminished, as most of them were unprovided with covering for the head and feet: those, however, who had been constant in their attendance, were clothed by Mr. C. to the best of his ability; and although at this time his income was considerable, yet he found it insufficient, consistently with the creditable maintenance of his family, to purchase such apparel for them as was continually needed.

In the spring of 1799, finding the work too much for himself and his wife, especially as he was still obliged to attend the evening preaching at Tottenham, he applied to several persons for assistance, but in vain. He then went again to Mr. Wilson, and obtained another recommendatory letter, with which he repaired to the Itinerant Society; but the only answer he could obtain from the committee was, "that if they listened to his application, they would have as many Sabbath schools to attend, as there were chandlers' shops in London." This was a painful answer, and filled his heart with sorrow. "Alas, poor Kent street!" he involuntarily said to himself as he retired; "is there none to take thee by the hand?" He then went to the Rev. Rowland Hill; but he was unable to obtain gratuitous teachers for his own school at Surrey Chapel. A few days afterwards he waited upon the Rev. Mr. Knight; but not one in his congregation had courage sufficient to venture down the street. As a last resource, he went to his old and tried friend, Mr. Burchett; who smiled at his discomfiture, and told him to be of good cheer, for assistance was at hand.

It happened very providentially that Mr. Burchett had, that day, attended his friend Mr.

Hugh Beams, of the Stock Exchange, to Surrey Chapel, where Mr. Hill had mentioned the great benefits resulting from Sabbath school instruction in Scotland; and prompted, perhaps, by the entreaties of Mr. Cranfield, had made a most urgent and powerful appeal to his hearers, to come forward and assist in promoting similar objects in London. Mr. Burchett, on returning home with his friend, consulted with him on the manner in which they might best engage in the work suggested by Mr. Hill. This subject was still occupying their attention, when Mr. Cranfield arrived at his friend's house. "Here," said Mr. Burchett, pointing to Mr. Beams, "is a man ready to assist you; and, in the mean time, I will undertake to discharge the next quarter's rent for the school."

The next Sabbath, Messrs. Burchett and Beams attended the Kent street school, where they found Mr. and Mrs. C. busily engaged with about forty children. Mr. Burchett now inquired whether a larger number could not be brought together, if teachers could be obtained; when Mr. C. readily engaged to collect as many children as the other could supply with teachers. Both parties, therefore, went to work with spirit; and on the following Sab-

bath two more teachers, Messrs. Sims and Kirk, joined the school. The former gentleman was brought from Surrey Chapel, and the latter was an agent of the Itinerant Society, who, having witnessed the unsuccessful application of Mr. C. to the committee, was induced thus to come to his assistance.

As "iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." This truth was never better exemplified than in the effect which this accession had upon the mind of Mr. Cranfield. Cheered and animated by the prospects before him, he proceeded with redoubled vigor to make a fresh attack upon this strong hold of Satan. The Rev. G. Collison, having, at his request, drawn up an address to the inhabitants of the district, Mr. Cranfield printed it, and circulated it through the neighborhood.

It is needless to say that the address, accompanied, as it was, by a promise of hats and bonnets to those who would regularly attend, had its desired effect. Numbers of children flocked to the school, so that the room was too small for their accommodation. A larger one was, therefore, engaged at No. 226, in the same street. And now Mr. Cranfield began to be concerned about the performance of his

promise. The children were all impatiently looking forward to the first of August, at which time the promise was to be fulfilled, and delighting themselves with the pleasing thought of being decked in their new attire. To disappoint them, under such circumstances, would be cruel; Mr. C., therefore, strenuously exerted himself for the fulfilment of his engagement; money was obtained; a quantity of shambra muslin bought; and Mrs. C., though otherwise much engaged, contrived, by the appointed time, to make the requisite number of neat cottage bonnets.

The long-expected day having arrived, the door was besieged with children long before the time for opening it. Their faces appeared unusually clean, and their countenances brightened up with the most joyous hopes and anticipations. The new hats and bonnets were produced; and the feeling of delight which sparkled in every eye at the sight of them, could only be equalled by the chagrin and vexation of those whose recent entrance, or irregular attendance, had not entitled them to such a reward.

On the following Sabbath, when the children had assembled in the street, for the purpose of proceeding to their accustomed place of wor-

ship, nearly the whole of the neighborhood was out to behold the pleasing sight; and most of the spectators had something to say respecting their neat and orderly appearance; some condemned themselves for not having sent their children to the school, and all seemed persuaded that the alteration in the appearance of the scholars was for the better; and if they were not quite convinced of the blessings of education they certainly thought it an advantage for their children to be thus decently clad. Mr. Cranfield surveyed the whole scene with unutterable satisfaction, and the delightful feelings which he experieneed amply repaid him for all his trouble.

Before taking leave of this department of Mr. Cranfield's labors, it will be proper to notice the extraordinary success with which his exertions at the school were attended.

It is, perhaps, not sufficiently considered by teachers, how great an amount of good may be accomplished among persons who are not immediately connected with their schools. How often have children carried home to their neighbors some striking fact which they have heard, or witnessed, in the school; they have thereby had their curiosity awakened, and, being induced to attend the school themselves,

for the purpose of listening to these pleasing details, the word has found an abiding place in their hearts. How often, while the children have been repeating their proofs, catechisms, or hymns, to their parents, have the arrows of God stuck fast in their souls, leading them to cry, "What must I do to be saved?" And what pleasing instances have the histories of Sabbath schools furnished, of the conversion of sinners, who, attracted to the place by the singing of the children, have thus been brought under the sound of the gospel. A circumstance of the latter kind, happened a few months after the opening of the school in Kent-street.

The landlady of the house where the school was held, being interested by the children's voices, as they sang the praises of God, was accustomed to sit on the stairs to listen, and there to remain during the time of the address. The word spoken seemed to make an impression on her mind: she soon became serious in her deportment, and soon afterwards being taken ill, she sent for Mr. Cranfield, who visited her, and found her very ignorant of God, and the way of salvation by Christ Jesus. But the Lord was pleased in a very short time to convince her of her need of a Saviour, and she was led to cry mightily for salvation. Her

prayers were not in vain. The Lord manifested himself to her as he does not unto the world, and sent peace to her soul. Mr. Hartnell, a student of Hoxton Academy, saw and conversed with her before she died, and was much edified by witnessing her faith and hope in Christ. "I have no other righteousness, sir," she said to him, "to recommend me to the favor of God, but that of Jesus Christ."

A few days after this, a very singular and providential circumstance occurred. Mr. Hartnell was one afternoon addressing the children, when a lodger, occupying the second floor, sat himself down on the stairs, opposite the school-door. Mr. H., having looked at him attentively, thought that he knew him; and after the service, asked him if he did not come from the same town as himself? He answered in the affirmative, but that, being involved in debt, he sought refuge in that part of London, thinking that he should not be found by his creditors. He was then very ill, and shortly afterward was confined to his bed. Mr. C. and Mr. H. both visited him in his illness, and their exhortations were blessed to his soul. He soon began to comprehend the plan of salvation, and became grieved that he had not before sought after the one thing needful. His

weakness increased every day, and as he approached the eternal world, his meetness for a participation in the joys of the redeemed before the throne, became more manifest. He lingered but a few days, and then quitted his frail tenement, "to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven."

The case of Mr. Archer, one of the parents, was no less singular. It being reported by some ill-disposed persons, that the children were severely beaten at the chapel for not sitting still, he went to Mr. Knight's meeting-house in Collyer's Rents, in a wretchedly dirty state, in order to ascertain the fact; determined that, if Mr. C. should strike his child, he would inflict summary vengeance upon him. He staid during the whole of the service; and seeing that the children were not corrected in the manner reported, he went peaceably away. On the next Sabbath, however, he attended again in the same state, and with a similar design; but retired as before. He attended on the third Sabbath; when the Lord was pleased to arrest his conscience, and give him to see what a sinner he was. After this, accompanied by his wife, he waited upon Mr. Knight, and opened to him the state of his mind. Mr. K. received him with that affection and kindness

which ever so remarkably distinguished him, and, directing the anxious inquirer to Jesus, he explained to him the way of God more perfectly. He regularly attended the ministry of Mr. K., and became a humble follower of Christ till his death, which happened several years afterwards.

The account of Mary Turner, a child of eleven years of age, whom Mr. and Mrs. C. met in the street, and invited to school, is truly pleasing and affecting. She was attacked by inflammation in the bowels about three weeks after she, with the other children, had received her new bonnet. An interesting account of this dear child was written by Mr. Cranfield, and published in the Evangelical Magazine for 1779. Mr. C. says—

"On the Friday night following the first attack of her disorder, she was heard to pray earnestly for mercy. Her father on hearing her, arose, and asked her what she meant, or who it was she asked to forgive her? It is God I ask forgiveness of, replied little Mary. On being asked if she thought she was a sinner; she answered, 'Yes, and I want God to forgive me, and have mercy on me.' All the next day she continued in prayer to Jesus Christ for mercy. After praying herself, she

requested her father, also, to pray with her, and soon after sung—

'How glorious is our heavenly King
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing
His awful majesty!'

"After this, she testified her thankfulness to the good gentleman and lady, as she expressed it, that had picked her up in the street, and brought her to the Sabbath school. Then turning to her brothers and sisters, she said, 'I beseech you by no means neglect the Sabbath school, for I have found benefit there, and so may you.' She then requested her father to write a note to her teacher, and to let him know that she was sick.

"After this, she cried, 'Father, Father, O I want you.' Her father went to her, and asked what she wanted? She said, 'Not you; I want my Father which is in heaven.' Again she cried, 'Master, Master, oh, I want you;' Her father asked, 'which of them?' She answered, 'You cannot take me to him, for he is in heaven; Jesus is my master.'

"Monday 26th," continues Mr. Cranfield, "I visited her, and asked if she knew me? With a smile, she answered, 'Yes,' and mentioned my name. I asked what she thought of

Jesus Christ as a Saviour; she said, 'I believe him to be the Saviour of sinners.' And have you reason to believe Jesus died for you? After a pause, she said, 'I hope.' I then began to interrogate her respecting her hope, but her pains returned with such violence, that she cried out, 'Dear Lord Jesus, help me.' As I was speaking to her mother about the doctor, she cried out, 'O my heavenly Doctor!' I asked who she meant; she answered, 'The Lord Jesus.' Some time after she had been wrestling with God in prayer, she clasped her hands together, saying, 'I have got him, I have got him; O precious Christ!' She then sung—

'When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I bid farewell to every fear
And wipe my weeping eyes.'

"Wednesday 28th, she was taken to Guy's Hospital, where she suffered much on account of the behavior of the women in the ward with her, whom she reproved, telling them that if they continued in that state, they would surely go to hell.

"The next day she was visited again, and exhorted to pray to Jesus; she answered, 'that she did;' but on account of the women, she

said very little, neither could the visiters speak to her so freely as they wished. She spoke in a very low tone of voice, so that only now and then a word could be heard, such as, 'Come, come, come, Lord Jesus, come.' About eleven o'clock in the evening she said, 'O Lord Jesus, make my bed,' and then requested her mother, who had been permitted to remain with her, to turn her, and immediately fell asleep, I trust, in the arms of Jesus. Thus died this dear child in the eleventh year of her age."

She was interred in Collyer's Rents' burial-ground, at the expense of the teachers, four boys conveying her to the grave, six girls holding up the pall, followed by 130 children. It is remarkable that the Rev. Mr. Knight, in concluding his address at the grave, turned to Mr. Cranfield, and said, "My earnest prayer to God for you is, that, as he has in a remarkable manner stirred you up in behalf of the rising generation, you may live to see our temples crowded with children, crying, 'Hosanna! Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'" A prayer which many will rejoice to know was fulfilled.

It was through this circumstance that Mr. Turner, the father of the child, was brought

out of obscurity, and made eminently useful in winning souls to Christ. He had been a respectable hair-dresser in Holborn; where, having been called to a knowledge of the truth, he refused any longer to transact business on the Sabbath. The consequence was a total loss of trade, accompanied by the greatest poverty and distress. He removed, therefore, to Snow's fields, Southwark, in order to avoid the gaze of his neighbors, where, on visiting his dying child, Mr. C. found him. By the assistance of the benevolent Mr. Burchett, his difficulties were removed, and he engaged hand and heart with the teachers in the work of Sabbath-school instruction. He died most happy in the Lord, in Collyer's Rents, at the house to which the school was then removed, and was buried near his dear child.

About this time, also, a sailor, a native of America, attracted by the singing of the children, stood at the school-door to listen. The hymn they were singing, was the following:—

"Soon as my infant lips can speak
Their feeble prayer to thee,
O let my heart thy favors seek!
Dear Lord, remember me."

The last line forcibly struck the mind of the weather-beaten seaman; the words followed him wherever he went; and from that time he regularly attended the ministry of the word.

He afterwards joined the Rev. Mr. Townsend's church, at Rotherhite, declaring that he received his first religious impressions from the singing of that hymn by the children of the Kent-street school.

Nor ought the case of a Mrs. Sawyer to be silently passed over. She had been invited, with the rest of the parents to partake of a twelfth-cake procured for them and the children by the teachers. After the cake had been handed round, each drew a ticket with a passage of scripture on it. And at the close of the service, Mr. C. gave out the hymn—

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah!
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty—
Hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more."

Finding it sweet to his soul, he sang the last lines three times over with great animation and fervor: and the Spirit of God accompanied them with power to the mind of the poor woman, so that she was made a partaker of

that bread "of which if a man eat, he shall live for ever." She lived for some time afterwards in the diligent use of the means of grace, and on her death-bed thanked God for the institution of the Sunday-school.

The last interesting circumstance which will be noticed in the present chapter, is the conversation of a little boy only eight years of age. A remark of Mr. Kirk, "Remember, children, that you are not too young to die," powerfully riveted his attention, and produced in him a concern for the salvation of his soul. On the Wednesday following, he was taken ill, and requested his father to send for Messrs. Kirk and Cranfield: but he, not apprehending that the child was in any danger, refused; and it was not till the child was heaving his last sigh, that the teachers were enabled to see him. The father then told them, in a very careless manner, that the child had been saying that he was a sinner, and had been crying from morning till night, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me." To his mother he said, "I have had a view of that glorious place to which my brother is gone: O how I wish to be there also! Do not cry for me, mother; I am going to heaven; I shall be there before four o'clock." His prophecy was literally fulfilled, for at two, his

happy spirit took its flight to the regions of eternal bliss.

Thus, the Lord, in a very short space of time, remarkably blessed the labors of Mr. Cranfield and his coadjutors, to the conversion of several individuals; for besides those who have been mentioned, there are now living a cloud of witnesses, who are ready to testify that the Kent-street school was not established in vain, nor were the labors of the teachers for nought.

Previous, however, to some of the transactions which have been detailed, Mr. Cranfield was called to act a principal part in the establishment of another school: an account of which is recorded in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE OPENING OF THE MINT SCHOOL, TO THE DEATH OF MR. NIXON.

In May, 1799, Mr. Burchett, moved by the powerful pleadings of the Rev. R. Hill on behalf of Sabbath-schools, and by the application of Mr. Cranfield for assistance, convened a meeting of his friends at the Hoxton Academy Chapel, with the view of raising annual subscriptions for defraying the expenses of the Kent-street school, and devising means for supplying it with teachers. At this meeting only four persons attended; namely, Messrs. Burchett, Beams, Pound, and Cranfield. The subscriptions amounted to four guineas, and each engaged to contribute annually the sum he had then subscribed. After some consultation, Mr. Beams proposed that, as they had now more money than would be sufficient to meet the present exigencies, they should extend their operations, and open another school in the Mint, a district near Kent-street. Mr. C., astonished at the proposal, asked how it was possible to carry on a second school while

their means were scarcely sufficient to supply the demands of the first; when Mr. B. sharply replied, "Cranfield, where is your faith?" This was enough; he felt ashamed that so young a convert as Mr. Beams should display greater faith than himself, who had witnessed so much of the power of God, in compelling the most formidable oppositions to make way for the advancement of his cause. Instead, therefore, of any longer opposing the motion, he seconded it; and Messrs. Beams and Cranfield were appointed to select a room in the most eligible situation.

The two friends on traversing the neighborhood, found it worse, if possible, than that of Kent-street. It abounded with filth and iniquity, was inhabited by persons of the worst description, and appeared to be a place where the prince of darkness had long held universal and undisputed sway. Nothing daunted, however, they hired a room in the very heart of Satan's dominions, at £4 per annum; and then personally waited on the inhabitants, with a request that they would send their children for instruction. The place selected, was in that part of Queen-street on which Willis's factory now stands, where the school was opened on the Sabbath, 16th of June, 1799.

On that morning a most interesting scene presented itself. The place was thronged with parents anxious to get their children admitted, and the first day more than forty were entered. Messrs. Cranfield, Beams, and Wills (a fresh laborer) were here actively employed all that Sabbath; while Messrs. Burchett and Kirk, with some other friends, took care of Kent-street school. The children appeared in a most wretched condition, few of them wearing shoes, and scarcely more than two or three having covering to their heads.

It is not to be supposed that this work was accomplished without strong opposition. Satan had here too long wielded his sceptre, to allow it to be arrested from his grasp without a struggle; and accordingly the teachers were reviled, insulted, and pelted with mud. Stones were sometimes thrown into the school, the windows broken, and all sorts of disturbances created; but these devoted men kept the even tenor of their way—insults and annoyances only serving to cement their union, and to increase their fervor and boldness at the throne of grace. Having put their hands to the gospel-plough, they never, for one moment looked back; but in breaking up the fallow-ground, they advanced with an energy that defied every

opposition, and a spirit that towered far above every obstacle.

In the latter end of July, 1799, a proposition was made to the teachers, by Mr. Wills, to open a school in Gravel-lane, situated on the north-west border of the Mint, and, at that time presenting a scene of wretchedness which almost equalled that of the Mint. The proposition was acceded to; and Mr. Cranfield, accompanied by Messrs. Wills and Beams, hired a garret at No. 20, Old Gravel-lane, and early in the following month the same was opened for a school. Here Mr. Sims chiefly labored on the Sabbath, until his death, assisted by Messrs. Payne, Doxsey, and others.

About this time, also, Mr. Cranfield assisted Mr. Burchett in opening a school in Garden-row, St. George's-fields, a place where such scenes of iniquity were continually witnessed, that the Rev. Mr. Berridge used to term it the "Devil's territory." This school was afterwards removed to a room near the King's Bench Prison, and was called the Debtors' school. Here Mr. C. labored during a portion of every Sabbath. Originally, the teachers were not confined to any particular school, but, acting together as one body, each went where his services were most required.

O how delightful was the union that existed among these devoted servants of the Lord. How admirably did they fulfil the divine command, "Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another!" These happy times were seldom referred to by Mr. Cranfield, in his latter days without tears, accompanied by the heart-inspiring quotation from the Psalmist, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

Soon after the opening of the school in Gravel-lane, a meeting was held for prayer and Christian conversation every Monday evening, to which the neighbors were invited; and at these meetings much good was effected. One circumstance ought not to be silently passed over. An old woman, aged seventy-five, came up one evening, when the friends were discoursing upon the subject of the corruption of human nature. This proved to be one of the times of the Son of man: the conversation, accompanied by the teaching of the divine Spirit, convinced her that she was an unpardoned sinner. During the week she was taken ill, and one of the teachers was sent for. Mr. Wills, accordingly, waited on her, when she addressed him thus:—

"Sir, when I first came into your garret, I heard a good gentleman speak such things as I never heard before, although I have been at Christ Church many times; I felt as if I was about to drop into hell, my knees knocked together. O sir, I am the vilest wretch that ever lived." After some conversation with her, Mr. Wills left, and called on Mr. Cranfield, who also visited her, when an interesting conversation ensued, of which the following may be given as a brief outline.

"Well, madam, how do find yourelf?

Woman. O, very low, sir.

Mr. C. Do you mean concerning your body or mind?

W. O, my mind, sir! I am a sinner; yes, a great sinner; indeed, I am. I have been a sinner for these seventy-five years, and never feared God in all my life.

Mr. C. Can you read?

W. No, sir, I wish I could. When I was young, there were no schools for teaching poor folks' children, as there are now.

Mr. C. My good woman——

W. Dear me, sir, don't call me good; I am the vilest creature that ever lived. If you did but know what I feel, you would have no good thoughts of me.

Mr. C. Well, then, I will consider you to be a very bad woman—one of the worst of sinners—

W. That you may very safely say, sir.

Mr. C. Well, though you are an old grey-headed sinner, though your sin be as scarlet, and red like crimson, the Bible tells me they shall be white as snow.

W. (interrupting)—But, does it say so of old sinners such as I am?

Mr. C. God has no respect of persons; and all the promises are made equally to the old and to the young. Mr. C. then mentioned several examples of God's mercy to aged sinners, and showed her, that when the Spirit of truth comes into the heart, it convinces the sinner of sin. He then proceeded to describe the nature of sin, and to show how it corrupted all the powers and faculties of the soul; when the poor woman, looking at him with surprise, said, "Why, sir, who told you this of me? Now, I will tell you the whole truth. You must know that when I came up to your meeting, I thought I was as good as any of you: I went to Christ Church every Sunday, and I thought God would save me at last. I was not then troubled about my sins, as I am now. Well, sir, do you know that while you were

speaking about sin, I was stabbed to the heart: I trembled all over. O, sir, you would not believe what a state I was in. I was afraid to go to bed, lest I should wake up in hell; and I have been unhappy ever since."

After directing her to the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone could save her, Mr. C. departed, but visited her, however, several times afterwards; and on the day previous to her death, she said to him, "Last night the tempter told me that God would have nothing to do with me, and that it was too late to think of calling upon him. 'Well,' said I, 'if I am cast out, it is no more than I deserve; but still I will trust in the Lord.' Soon after this, I felt great love to Christ, and recollected his words, 'I give eternal life.' Mr. C. then asked her what were her views of Christ? To which she answered, "Why, sir, you know that I am very ignorant; but I will tell you, as well as I can—I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he came from heaven to die for sinners such as I am; though I did not think so at first, when you visited me; but now I find my mind gives way in love to him. Yes, I do love him. O dear sir, what should I do without him? He is every thing to me." She then wept bitterly;

but, after a pause, she continued: "Blessed be my dear Jesus for having looked on such a vile sinner as I am, and taken my cause into his own hands. And does he say, 'Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am?' Then come, dear Lord Jesus, and carry me home." The next day she died, rejoicing in God her Saviour, and triumphing over death, through the blood of the cross.

About this period, Mr. Cranfield was called to assist Mr. Burchett in opening a school in Rosemary-lane; which being accomplished, and placed under the care of suitable persons, Mr. B. directed his whole attention to the schools in Southwark, where scholars were rapidly increasing.

In March, 1800, the Rev. Mr. Mosely, from Scotland, formerly a student in Hoxton Academy, visited Mr. C., and explained to him the method of imparting religious instruction on Sabbath evenings at Glasgow. The plan was as follows:—

Those children of the Bible and Testament classes, who were more than eight years of age, were assembled at six o'clock on Sabbath evening. The service was commenced in the usual way, with singing, reading and prayer.

The scholars were then catechized respecting their knowledge of the sermon they had heard in the morning. Each child then repeated the question in the Assembly's Catechism appointed for the evening's subject, with proofs from the Old and New Testaments, when a series of questions were put for further elucidation of the subject. A short and animated address was then given, and the meeting closed with singing and prayer.

Mr. C. perceiving the good effects that were likely to result from the adoption of such a plan, entered into it with his usual ardor and alacrity, though it was attended with great sacrifice of time; for, independent of the whole Sabbath evening being occupied, the question and the answer in the Assembly's Catechism were obliged to be written for each child, there being then no books published in a cheap form for the young, as at the present day. He saw that this would be an admirable method of sending the gospel home to the parents and neighbors; that the children, for the most part, not being able to make out the writing themselves, would repair to those who could; and thus, those who never came out to hear the word, would have it brought home to their own houses.

He was not deceived in his expectations, for a remarkable circumstance of this kind happened soon after the commencement of the evening instruction. A little girl, named Venables, took home a paper upon the subject of regeneration, and, upon repeating the passage in John iii, "Ye must be born again," she asked her mother what it meant? This question the mother could not answer; but it fixed her attention. Wherever she went, the words, "Ye must be born again" seemed to sound in her ears. She began to feel that something was wanting as a preparation for heaven, and she therefore obtained what religious books she could from her friends, in order, as she said, that she might be enabled to make her peace with God. This poor woman had for a long time been in a declining state of health; and in the summer of 1800, being much worse, she sent for Mr. Cranfield to visit her, who, with Messrs. Wills and Nixon, saw her frequently. Her memoir was written by Mr. Nixon, and afterwards published in the Evangelical Magazine for 1800. Her dying testimony is thus related by Mr. N.

"About six weeks before she died, she was greatly recovered, and was enabled to go down stairs. Mr. Cranfield called upon her at this

time, and was surprised to see her so much better. 'Ah, friend,' said she, 'you see the Lord has brought me into the world again. I was in hopes I should have been in heaven before now; but his will be done. I hope I shall have strength to stand in the heat of the battle, till he take me off the field.' She continued down stairs for near a month, but her disorder returned again so violently and suddenly, that it was with difficulty she could get up again. The prospect of the joys of heaven was a constant feast to her mind, and rendered her extreme sufferings in the body the happiest portion of her life. She frequently repeated those promises which spoke of the Lord as a kind Shepherd to his people. Her thoughts dwelt much upon the sufferings of Christ; and she would often say, 'What are all my pains and sufferings, however great, when compared with those of my dear Lord.' A friend asked her if she was not afraid of the pains of death? She answered, that 'death was a welcome messenger to her; she longed for it day and night.' Another friend said, 'I think you are much altered for the worse.' She replied, 'I think I am much altered for the better, for I shall soon be gone.' On the morning of the day she died, the sun shone very beautifully, and she desired

the window-shutter to be opened, and said, 'Soon shall I behold the Sun of righteousness, whom I shall see for myself, and not another.' In the evening, a friend came, and informed me she was dying. I immediately went and asked her how she did: 'O,' said she, 'I am very weak, but I am waiting for my blessed Redeemer!' I promised to be with her again about nine, when I waited upon her with Messrs. W. and B., and found her almost incapable of speaking. She was asked if she could bear to hear me pray? She said, 'I might say what I had to say to the family, and then pray that she might have a speedy dissolution.' And when I was at prayer, the pains of death came upon her: her lips seemed to move much; and the last words that could be distinctly heard, were, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;' and in a few minutes after, her soul took its flight to the bosom of the blessed Jesus, whom she ardently loved and longed for, during the short period of her spiritual warfare."

Soon after this, Mr. C. was requested to attend the death-bed of a little boy, named Hopper, who was affected with small-pox. This child had attended the evening instruction, and

was brought to the knowledge of the truth through the powerful addresses of Mr. C. The sufferings of this child were very short, so that the friends had but little opportunity of seeing him. Much of his time was occupied in prayer, and he died while engaged in that holy exercise.

Mr. C. having now witnessed the beneficial results of evening instruction, became extremely anxious for its adoption in all the schools with which he was acquainted. For this purpose he wrote letters to all his friends engaged in Sabbath school labors, giving them a description of the plan, and offering to assist them in introducing it. The following is the copy of a letter which he wrote to Mr. Furze, the superintendent of a school at Croydon, where he had promised to attend for this purpose:—

Hoxton, Jan. 17, 1801.

"Dear Sir,—I am sorry that it has not been in my power to pay you a visit, according to my promise. On the Sabbath following, when I got up, in order to go to Croydon, I was taken so ill as to be obliged to go to bed again. Last Sabbath I was at the Mint, or otherwise that school would have been neglected; and to-morrow is ordinance day. Though I cannot

come, my prayers are not wanting on your behalf. I am present with you in spirit, though absent in body. The first opportunity I have, you may depend upon my coming down. I wish to see your school well established; but above all, to hear that the Lord, by the power of his arm, is working salvation in the hearts of the children. As a means, let me humbly recommend religious instruction in the evening. You cannot conceive the blessed effects which have been produced by the adoption of this plan, in many of the children and others. A minister told me that he knew a school where, in consequence of this instruction, there was scarcely a child that was not converted. May it be thus at Croydon; I have sent you a list of subjects for the first quarter, should you think proper to give them to the children weekly.

"O that you and I may lean on Jesus for wisdom, strength, and salvation, not only for ourselves, but for the dear children also! May we never be tempted to trust in our own bow or sword; but, like one of old, say, 'It is thou, O Lord, that savest us.' Unless the Lord be with us, all will be in vain. O that I could be convinced of this truth more and more, so as to look only to Christ! How apt are we to trust in means, and overlook the God of means.

Means are of no effect without the power of God. They are but as the axe, a dead instrument in the hands of a man. Wherefore it is said, in Haggai, 'Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm.' There is a a natural aptitude in the means to produce such effects; but yet, if the Lord do but suspend his influence, they can do nothing. But he can work without means, as he says, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit.' If there be none to help, yet his own arm shall bring his salvation. And the Lord doeth this, first, That he may show forth some special discoveries of his power. We should be wholly taken up by the creature, if the Lord was not pleased to show forth something more than the creature's power. Second, That the souls of his people may depend upon him alone, both in the want and enjoyment of his creatures. Third, It is to have our eye fixed more upon our heavenly home, where means and ordinances will be done away, for God shall be all in all; that is, he shall be all unto his people immediately. We shall then be at the fountain-head, drinking full draughts of heavenly bliss. O, what will be our joy when our eyes are open to see Jesus in his glory!

"The Lord the Spirit prepare us for the sight, and keep us looking to Jesus by faith, until we shall see him as he is.

"Yours, to serve in the dear Lord Jesus,

"THOMAS CRANFIELD."

The exertions of Mr Cranfield at this time in the cause of God, were almost beyond belief. The children were brought from Kent street school to the Mint every Sabbath evening; and Messrs. Turner, Nixon, and Wills conducted the service there, while Mr. C. was employed at other places. The following memoranda, in his own hand-writing, will furnish a specimen of his extraordinary labours.

"January 25, 1801.—Set out for Croydon, to assist in imparting religious instruction to the Sabbath school instituted in that place.

February 1st.—Attended the Mint school in the morning; then at the Debtors school; opened the Mint in the afternoon, then attended at Kent street; and in the evening again at the Mint.

"Sabbath, July 8th.—Went to the Mint in the morning; took the children to chapel; went at eleven o'clock to the Debtors school; returned home to Hoxton to dinner. In the after-

noon and evening attended again at the Mint. Monday evening, visited the Mint; gave out the subjects to the children on slips of paper, not being in possession of catechisms. Wednesday, attended the Gravel-lane school. Friday, again at the Mint.

"Sabbath, 15th.—Attended at the Mint and Debtors schools in the morning; in the afternoon, opened the school at the Mint; then attended at Kent-street. In the evening went to Croyden, and superintended the service there, and conducted a prayer-meeting till nine o'clock. Monday, returned home in the morning in time for business; in the evening attended the Mint school, and visited some of the sick parents and neighbors.

"Sabbath, 22d.—Attended, morning and afternoon, at the Mint and Debtors schools; evening, at the school in Rosemary lane.

"March 1st.—Took the children to Mr. Knight's; preached at the Debtors school; returned to Hoxton to dinner. In the afternoon, again at the Mint; discoursed in the evening at Tottenham, and returned home to Hoxton."

Astonishing as were these labors, Mr. C. nevertheless felt uneasy that he was not able,

on account of the distance of his residence to do more. After much conversation, therefore, with his wife upon the subject, it was determined that they should remove to Southwark, within a short distance of the sphere of their labors. Accordingly, in the summer of 1801, they took up their abode in Bermondsey street, when fresh plans were projected for more extensive usefulness, by a regular visitation of the parents of the children belonging to the Mint and Kent street schools.

But the Lord, in his wise arrangements, thought fit for a season to frustrate the benevolent intentions of his servant, by laying him upon a sick-bed. Here he was confined for several weeks by a violent attack of brain fever, and was at one time entirely given over by his physician. His afflicted family stood weeping around him, expecting every moment that his soul would take its flight to the unseen world; but, when anxiety was at its climax, he suddenly opened his eyes, and calmly asked for some refreshment. It was evident that his reason, which had been long suspended, had returned, and hopes were again entertained of his final recovery. Meetings for prayer, during this time, were frequently held by his friends on his behalf; and the Lord heard and answered their

supplications, by enabling him again, after the lapse of three months, to unite with them in their work and labor of love.

This temporary suspension of the labors of Mr. C. did not, however, impede the progress of the gospel among the poor. Another appeal was made at Surrey Chapel; in answer to which, no less than twenty-four persons came forward, and rallied round the standard which appeared about to fall from the grasp of its intrepid and valiant leader. Of this circumstance, Mr. Wills informed him soon after the turn of his disorder, which called forth from him expressions of gratitude and praise to God, who had not only supported him and his family under his trials, but had made the temporary loss of one laborer the means of a twenty-fourfold gain. In the November following, a son was born to him, whom he named Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

In consequence of this addition of laborers, Mr. C. had now more time for carrying into operation a plan which he had long contemplated, for the relief of working men in times of sickness and infirmity, and thus save them from actual want, or a parish poor-house. In his visitations of the sick, he had frequently seen whole families, which had been previously

in circumstances of comparative respectability, suddenly reduced to deep poverty and distress, through the visitation of divine Providence upon their master and head. He considered that societies might be formed of industrious mechanics, who, from small monthly contributions, might afford ample relief to each other in cases of necessity. Some such societies were already in existence, but were founded upon so precarious a basis, that they furnished no security to members for the fulfilment of their engagements. Correct data were, however, wanted, upon which to construct a table of contributions and benefits; but, as this could not be obtained, he calculated, as well as he could, by means of his visits to the poor, the average number of sick mechanics in every hundred; and thus was enabled to ascertain, that a contribution of from two shillings to two shillings and sixpence monthly, would, under certain regulations, afford an allowance to sick members of from fifteen shillings to one pound per week, besides a liberal allowance for their funeral, in case of their decease.

Having submitted his plan to Mr. Burchett, he went diligently to work, and established these societies in Enfield, Edmonton, Tottenham, Hornsey, Brentford, Walworth, and sev-

eral parts of London. Many of these societies are still in a flourishing state, and some were superintended by him until a short time previous to his death, when increasing age and infirmity compelled him to relinquish the office.

But the welfare of the souls of men was his principal object; for them he labored with all the energy which his robust constitution was capable of sustaining. He was in the Mint and about Kent street three or four evenings in the week, relieving the sick, directing the inquiring, encouraging the wavering, and reproving vice and immorality. On the Sabbath he would sometimes take his stand in Mint square, near to the school, and there reprove the vices of the inhabitants, and entreat them to flee from the wrath to come, by laying hold of the only hope set before them in the gospel.

At this time, Mr. C. had become pretty well known in the neighborhood of the Mint, and was seldom offered any personal insult, although twice he was robbed of his watch, and has lost handkerchiefs almost without number. Mrs. C. was in continual alarm for his safety, especially in the winter season, and used often to tell him that she expected he would be brought home, some night, a lifeless corpse; but he would smile at her fears, and say that

the Lord knew full well how to protect his servants while engaged in his employment.

The whole of the capabilities of Mr. Cranfield, both of body and mind, appear at this time to have been exerted in promoting the welfare of his species. No season found him unemployed. If indisposition confined him to the limits of the sick chamber, he would send for some of the Sabbath school children, that he might there unfold to them the mysteries of redeeming love, and set them portions of Scripture to learn, for their edification and improvement. He was employed, in season and out of season, in winning souls to Christ, and thought no personal sacrifice too great for the attainment of this one grand object.

In all his duties and engagements, he found in his wife an able counsellor and a steady and devoted assistant. Her amiable temper and sweet disposition, combined with her sagacity, prudence and piety, rendered her pre-eminently successful in engaging the affections of the children, while imparting to them the knowledge of a Saviour's love. In the winter of 1801 she commenced the practice of having a hot joint for dinner on the Sabbath, not so much on her own account, or that of the family, as that she might thereby be enabled to

afford a treat to some of the children, three or four of whom were always taken home with Mr. C. after morning worship. The children, whose good behaviour entitled them to this distinction, were informed of the circumstance on the previous Sabbath; and their anxious looks and inquiries to ascertain who were the fortunate individuals that their teacher delighted thus to honor, showed that they held this privilege in no little estimation. Many of the children have, indeed, declared that they never knew what it was to partake of a joint of meat, except on these happy occasions.

Such opportunities of doing good to her youthful charge, were never suffered to escape by Mrs. C. unimproved. Before they returned to the school in the afternoon, she would give them most excellent advice respecting their conduct in the world, explain to them the snares and temptations which they would, in all probability, be called to pass through, and point them to that God who has promised to be their help and support in the time of trial. Nor did she stop here. Such girls as had distinguished themselves by their regular attendance at school, and attention to the instruction given, she would, at a suitable age, take under her roof, to be instructed in household work, and

then endeavor to provide them with situations in respectable families. The amount of good that was accomplished in this way is incalculable; nor will it ever be fully ascertained, until that day, "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, with his angels, and reward every man according to his deeds."

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE DEATH OF MR. CRANFIELD'S PARENTS TO THE DEATH OF HIS YOUNGEST SON.

Shortly after the death of his co-laborer, Mr. Nixon, Mr. Cranfield was summoned to attend the dying bed of his venerable father, afflicted with the dropsy, who died in the triumphs of faith, imploring blessings on his son, that he might have grace to follow him as far as he had followed Christ.

After the death of his father, Mr. C. resided at his house in Hightimber street, and took care of his mother, whom he watched over with the fondest attention and solicitude until her death, which happened shortly afterwards, when he removed to Tooley street.

In the year 1806, Mr. Cranfield revisited Tottenham, at the request of Mr. Burchett, to ascertain how the infant cause was advancing. Having reported to Mr. B. that it was in a low condition, he was requested by that indefatigable servant of Christ to open a school about a mile and a half farther on, which he did, and having attended it six Sabbaths, he resigned it into other hands, returning to his old

sphere of labor in Southwark. This produced a spirit of revival in that part, so that the example was followed by other Christians, and schools were established in Edmonton, Ponder's End, Enfield, Wynchmore Hill, Southgate, Walthamstow, and Cheshunt.

In June, 1806, Mr. Cranfield was conversing with Mr. Charles Doxsey on the utility of Sabbath schools, when mention was made of the profanation of the Sabbath, which was constantly exhibited on Kennington Common; and it was thought that this would be a desirable spot for the introduction of the gospel, by the opening of a school. They, therefore, took an early opportunity of visiting the neighborhood, and waited on the Rev. Mr. Povah, minister of Kennington Chapel, who received them favorably, gave them great encouragement, and kindly granted them the use of the vestry until they could procure a more convenient place for imparting instruction.

On the following Sabbath morning they visited the inhabitants; and, after much exertion, succeeded in obtaining eleven scholars, whom they brought with them to the school, and received the promise of a greater number for the afternoon. Before two o'clock, therefore, the friends were again at their post, and

to their great satisfaction the scholars amounted to fifty. They took every opportunity of canvassing the neighborhood, and soon had so many children that the vestry was too small for their accommodation. They again applied to the Rev. Mr. P., and he allowed them the use of the chapel, and assisted them as often as his health would permit, by giving addresses to the children. They received also the valuable aid of Messrs. Beams and Burchett.

After some time, it was thought advisable to form a society for the support of the school, and it was, therefore, announced from the pulpit that a meeting would be held in the vestry on the following Monday evening, at seven o'clock, for this purpose. This meeting was attended by a great number of the congregation; a committee was appointed, and the sum of fifteen pounds collected. Mr. C. having now accomplished his object of establishing this school, left it under the superintendence of Mr. Doxsey, and retired again to his old sphere of labor. Occasionally, however, he visited the school, and was rejoiced to find the work of the Lord greatly prospering there.

About July, 1809, a room was taken in Prince's Buildings, White Hart street, Kennington lane, and was fitted up at the cost of

£170, on which occasion, the celebrated Rev. Thomas Spencer (who was afterwards drowned at Liverpool) preached an appropriate sermon, from the text, "What think ye of Christ?" The labors of the teachers were here remarkably blest, to the conversion of many children; a number of whom are now members of congregations, and teachers of Sabbath schools; and a few are eminent and devoted ministers of the gospel. In 1831 the old school was pulled down, and a larger one built; on the opening of which, the Rev. Rowland Hill preached to a crowded congregation.

Some time after the establishment of this school, Mr. Cranfield was greatly encouraged by meeting a young female, who accosted him in the street, and said, "O sir, I have been a very great sinner; for I was a Sabbath breaker, and used to indulge on that day in all manner of rioting on the common, till your school was opened, when I was among the first that attended; and I can truly say, that the instruction I there received, has, by the blessing of God, been the means of saving me from ruin." This interview was exceedingly gratifying to Mr. C., and he often afterwards spoke of it to Mr. Doxsey, for the purpose of stimulating him to continued exertions for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom.

Nor was this the only fruit of his labors in this school that he was permitted to witness. In the year 1809, when a general jubilee took place, in consequence of King George the Third having entered the fiftieth year of his reign, Mr. Cranfield being at Kennington Sunday school, offered a reward of a Bible to any boy that would find out the number of years each of the kings of Judah reigned, and repeat it to him on a given day. This was done by one of the scholars much, to his satisfaction, and the Bible was presented to him. Some years passed away, the circumstance being forgotten by Mr. C., when one day, visiting Prospect place school (one of the schools connected with Surrey Chapel), a teacher came up to him, and said, "Mr. Cranfield, do you remember giving a Bible to a boy at the Kennington Sabbath school, for informing you the time each king of Judah reigned?" After some consideration, Mr. C. replied that he did. "Well, sir," said the teacher, "I am the person, and I have the Bible now: I bless God that you put it into my hands, for it has been the means, with other circumstances, of bringing me to a knowledge of the truth." Several of the inhabitants have likewise expressed their gratitude to the teachers for having

opened the school at Kennington, as thereby a vast number of unruly children had been drawn off from the common, and the moral state of the district very much improved.

Hitherto, Mr. Cranfield had continued a superintendent of Kent street school, although he was much engaged in promoting the cause of instruction in other places; but he now resigned that office into the hands of Mr. West, who still continues to hold the same, and devoted his attention chiefly to the Mint school, which was then under the especial direction of Mr. Burchett. A large school was afterwards built by the society in Kent street, the foundation-stone of which, was laid by the Rev. Rowland Hill, and at the death of Mr. Cranfield, this school contained upwards of 500 children.

In 1807, Mr. Burchett having removed to Kentish Town, discontinued his labors in the Mint, and opened another school near his new residence.

Upon accepting the resignation of Mr. Burchett, the teachers unanimously chose Mr. Cranfield for their superintendent. Before the close of the year 1807, being anxious to ascertain what advantages had resulted from the instruction imparted in the Mint school, Mr. C. convened a meeting of the old scholars, at

which several attended, and gave evidence of a work of grace having commenced in their souls.

Some of Mr. C.'s friends, however, did not approve of this meeting; and he was compared to a child who had dug up the seed newly sown, to ascertain if it had taken root. Nothing intimidated by this sarcasm, he prevailed on his fellow-laborers at Gravel lane school, to hold a similar meeting at that place; and there also, it was perceived that the Lord had greatly honored his servants, and had made them instrumental in the conversion of many souls. Speaking of this meeting some time afterwards, in a letter to a friend, he says, "In the year 1807, I witnessed a sight in Gravel lane school, which would have been a treat for an angel. Brother Sims collected the old scholars, and I counted between twenty and thirty souls, who ascribed their conversion to the instruction they had received principally from him and Payne. There are, at this very time, some of the old scholars teaching in different schools at the west-end of the town. Several are in Mr. Wesley's connection, in Southwark; one is a member of Surrey Chapel, and another is preaching the gospel in the country." Mr. Cranfield, therefore, stands honored of God as the first projector of old

scholars' meetings, which have been the means of creating so many revivals in Sabbath schools, and of conferring such lasting benefit on the church and on the world.

On the 16th of June, 1808, being the anniversary of the opening of the school in the Mint, he held his second meeting of old scholars. The proceedings of this meeting he detailed in a letter to the Committee of the Southwark Sabbath School Society: and, as it will serve to illustrate, more particularly, the nature of these meetings, and perhaps, be the means of their introduction to other schools, where the benefits resulting from them are not as yet fully appreciated, the letter is given in full:—

"GENTLEMEN,—From a sense of respect due to you, as well as for the encouragement of the teachers, I have taken the liberty of informing you of the second meeting of old scholars, held at the Mint-school, on the 15th of June, 1808. A few days previous to the meeting, a circular letter was addressed to them, requesting their company to tea, for Christian conversation. The meeting commenced at three o'clock in the afternoon, and was attended by a considerable number of young persons. Some were mar-

ried, and brought their children; and many were present, whom we should most likely have never seen or heard of, were it not for this meeting, which was called together to ascertain how far the religious instruction imparted at the school had influenced their minds and conduct since they had left. The joy they seemed to experience in beholding each other again in the flesh, was truly gratifying. After inquiring after each other's welfare, and a little conversation on by-gone days, which occupied the time till four o'clock, tea was introduced; and this being over, the service commenced with singing, reading and prayer. I then gave a short prefatory address, explaining the object of the meeting, and afterwards interrogated them individually. 'Elizabeth,' said I, to the first, 'what effect has the instruction you received at the school had upon your mind?' After a short pause, she answered, 'I was recommended by one of the teachers to a situation as a nursery-maid; and it has been my constant practice, at all seasonable times, especially on the Sabbath, to collect the children of the family, and catechize them after the manner of the school.' This statement was subsequently confirmed by her mistress, who considered her a pious character. I then

addressed her by way of encouragement, and called upon another in a similar manner. She, poor creature, burst into tears, and, with a melting heart, spoke of the repeated opportunities she had been favored with, but, like many, had failed to improve them. The concerns of the world, and its deceptions, had enticed away her mind from the best things. She attended, with her husband, on the means of grace, and was very thankful for the instruction she had received; for she could not tell a letter when she entered the school, but now could both read and write. After a suitable exhortation to her, I called upon another. This young woman had passed through many trials, and had had three children, one of whom was at her breast. She had a lively sense of the evil of sin, and the corruption of her heart; she knew perfectly the way of salvation by Christ; but seemed to possess little of the comforts of it in her soul. She said that her desire was to love the Lord with all her heart, and that it was the prevailing wish of her soul to be conformed to his image. She attended the preaching at Mr. Knight's, and the weekly prayer-meeting in Kent street.

"The next person had likewise an infant in her arms. She gave a very pleasing account of

her conversion to God by means of a female teacher, whose practice it was, when her class came up to read, to speak to the children about the Saviour.

"The fifth was a decent married female, and with great modesty she gave us an account of her experience, and a most scriptural and spiritual one it was. I had not heard so gratifying a one for some time. The work was begun when at school, and increased by her attendance at several prayer-meetings with other pious young women. She gave us an account of a number of passages of Scripture which the Lord had applied to her mind when under conflicts and temptations, and closed with an expression of gratitude for the instruction she had received; for she, likewise, did not know a letter of the alphabet when she entered the school. Were I to give you a full account of this person, which time will not allow, you would say, 'Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?'

"After an exhortation, and prayer for the infants, I was about to call on the next, when there appeared such a manifestation of the presence, majesty, and power of God, as I cannot express but in the language of Jacob at Bethel, 'How dreadful is this place! it is

none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.' It was almost overpowering, and appeared evidently to be felt by all. The experience of the last person was the means of producing conviction in another, who cried out, with agony of mind, and bitter weeping, that she had once enjoyed the comforts of religion, and had been enabled to say, that an hour spent in the service of the Lord, was better than a thousand spent in sin; but she had backslidden from God, and had given up her mind to things which did not profit. 'O,' said she, 'what would I give if my experience was like that of my school-fellows!' She then seized me by the hand, and said, 'O, sir, do, do, pray for me.'

"After having complied with her request, and her excited feelings were somewhat allayed, I called upon the next, who gave us a pleasing account of her change of heart, through the instruction she had received at the school, and informed us that she had joined the church under Mr. Knight.

"I then called upon the next, who, in broken accents, gave us an interesting account of her conversion, through the instrumentality of another female teacher. It is sufficient for me

to say, that she is a member of Mr. Dore's chapel, Maze-pond.

"Here, sir, I lost all fortitude: I could go on no further; for I was overcome with astonishment to hear these young persons speaking of the wonderful things of God. And such was my weakness, that I cried out, 'Lord, I have lived long enough: now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' I then called on brothers Sims and Wortham to go on with the service.

"Brother Wortham stood up, and said, that he had often been discouraged, insomuch that he thought of leaving the school; but now he was surrounded with encouragements, and, by the strength of the Lord, he would persevere. He then gave out a hymn, and addressed them from Deut. 8: 2, 3.

"Such another day I never expect to witness. I have here given you but a very faint and brief account of the meeting; my time and abilities will not suffer me to do more. There were others present who, I have every reason to believe, were subjects of Divine grace. Upon the whole, I am fully satisfied that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"THOMAS CRANFIELD."

Such was the delightful evidence which the Lord vouchsafed to the truth of his word: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." And when it is considered that the parents of some of those, in whom such a change had taken place, were thieves, and abandoned characters, it may well be said, "What hath God wrought!" It were to be wished that those teachers who are ready to abandon the cause in despair, in consequence of the apparent fruitlessness of their labors, saying, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" would adopt the plan of Mr. C. and call together the scholars who have passed from the school; and it is presumed that, like him, they would have abundant reason to say, that "they have not labored in vain, nor spent their strength for nought."

At this meeting of old scholars, it was ascertained that no less than fourteen of those present were members of churches, and that there was scarcely one who did not attend a place of worship. These meetings have since been held annually, and none have passed without fresh specimens having been produced

of the glorious fruits of righteousness, to the praise, and honor, and glory of God, from the seed scattered in this unpromising soil.*

Mr. C., thus encouraged, went forward with fresh vigor, projected new plans of improvement, stirred up his friends to bring more laborers into the harvest, and employed himself, both on the Sabbath and week-days, in seeking after precious souls, for the purpose of bringing them under the sound of the gospel; and in these attempts he was generally useful and successful.

One Sabbath afternoon, he went out upon his errand of mercy, accompanied by his daughter (who now well remembers the circumstance), and saw a number of children playing upon a dust-heap, in a most deplorable condition; some were nearly naked, and others had merely dirty sacking to cover them. Unconscious, however, of their own degradation, they were dancing merrily upon the loathsome accumulation of rubbish, when Mr. Cranfield went up to them, and commenced singing, to a sprightly tune, the lines—

"Idle boys and girls are found,
Playing on the devil's ground."

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* These meetings are now held annually, in all the schools of the Southwark Society.

The children, struck with astonishment, ceased from their gambols; and, like persons in expectation of some fearful visitation, shrank back, and drew near to each other. "My dear children," said he, "do you know you are standing on the devil's ground? Yes," he continued, as they cast their eyes first on the ground, and then on him, with wonder and surprise, "this is the devil's ground; but if you will come with me to the school (pointing to the back of it, at that time in Peter street), I will there tell you about God, and teach you to read his holy word; and, if you continue there, you shall have some nice clothes to put on." The children now gathered around him, and asked him many questions about the school; which he answered so pleasingly, that several consented to accompany him; and having seated them in a class, he commenced the work of instruction. So wretched was their appearance, however, that they were avoided by the other children as infectious; but, being pleased upon the whole with the manner in which they had been treated, they came again. Their parents were waited upon, who promised to send them regularly, upon which they were furnished with decent clothing, and Mr. C. had the

pleasure, a few years afterwards, of seeing some of them occupying respectable stations in life.

One of these lads, thus raised from the very dunghill, obtained a situation, through the influence of one of the teachers, in a shop, where, however, the master paid but little regard to truth; and on one occasion, being desired to tell a customer, who had called about some work which had been neglected, that which he knew to be a falsehood, he peremptorily refused, saying, that his teacher had instructed him never to tell a lie. He was threatened with dismissal, but to no purpose; the boy continued resolute, and the master was obliged to excuse himself to his customer as well as he was able. Notwithstanding the vexation of the master at this refusal, he could not but secretly admire the boy's conduct, and ever afterwards placed such reliance on his fidelity, as to intrust him with the key of the till; a confidence he could not place in any member of his own family. This boy, before he left the school, was in the same class as the writer of this memoir, and the last time he saw him, he was occupying a confidential situation in a merchant's counting-house.

His compassion for the wants of poor children was such, as to prompt him to acts which would be censured by those who did not experience the same intense anxiety for their welfare. About this period, being exceedingly desirous of procuring some shoes and bonnets for the more destitute of his youthful flock, and being unprovided with ready-money sufficient for the purpose, he pledged his only remaining article of plate, in order to obtain the necessary supply. Frequently his little daughters have gone home crying to their mother, in consequence of having met a child in the street with either a frock or a bonnet, of theirs, which they had saved up their own money to purchase. "Never mind," Mrs. C. would say to them when she witnessed their distress, "I will buy you a better one;" and she was always as good as her word. At one time, when his family were going into mourning, he gave away the whole of their colored clothes, rather than they should lie disused while so many children were destitute. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that children flocked to the school in great numbers, and that, though possessing a respectable income, he had but little surplus to lay by for any emergency.

Mr. C. had for some years been sailing smoothly along the stream of life, with both wind and tide in his favor; but now he was called upon to navigate in deeper waters of distress than any in which his weather-beaten bark had heretofore been launched. His devoted and amiable wife, his cheerful assistant in all his works of charity and usefulness, was now to be taken from him; and while yet in the meridian of life, her sun was to set in our hemisphere, casting a gloom over every heart that had been warmed and cheered by her pious conversation and example.

Mrs. C. had enjoyed but indifferent health for some months, when in November, 1808, she was confined with a still-born infant, and five days afterwards she was released from sickness, sorrow and sin, and her spirit was admitted into the unclouded presence of her Saviour, whom she loved and trusted, and whose service had long been her delight. A brief sketch of her life and character was given by her bereaved husband to the Rev. Mr. Humphries of Union street Chapel, who preached her funeral sermon. The following extract from the memoir will, perhaps, prove interesting to the reader.

"When attending on the word, she was in general enabled to feed on it with joy and profit. Her confidence in God, as her Saviour, was increased by the exercise of faith on his promises; frequently she would repeat those words, trembling all the while lest she should deceive herself:—

'Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress,' &c.

She had been taught to live on Jesus as a God of providence, and to trust him in the view and experience of the deprivation of every earthly comfort, and to the last day of her life, she was accustomed to say, 'It shall be well.' I am a witness for her that in this glorious work of living by faith, she outstripped me, and frequently reproved me for my unbelief. Her faith always led her to the same object; and the more she received, the bolder and more confident she grew. 'Not one good thing,' she would often say, 'has failed of what the Lord hath spoken.' O, how often, when God has gladdened our hearts by his kindness, has she said to me, 'Come, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.' How sweet is the memory of those days!

"Her kindness to her poor neighbors, as well as to the children of the Sabbath schools and their parents, was exemplary. She was not only an excellent pattern of domestic kindness, but an example of charity and benevolence. The instruction of the rising generation peculiarly engaged her attention. Often has she accompanied me to the schools at Tottenham, Rotherhithe, Kent street, and the Mint, with an infant in her arms, when we lived at Hoxton; at other times, when half-hearted professors would say to her, 'I am surprised that your husband should neglect you and the family on the Sabbath, to attend the schools,' she would reply, 'He is doing the Lord's work, and I am content to stay by the stuff.' Never, no, never, have I heard her utter a single word that would convey an idea that she wished my zeal in this glorious employ to be in the least abated.

"O, when or where did a distressed case of any of the children's parents arise, that she did not, either by herself, or through some other person, visit and relieve? With what pleasure did she entertain the children, in their turn on the Sabbath, at the family table, and how would she exhort her own children to be grateful to that God who had provided for

them, while many of the dear lambs at the school had scarcely any food to eat! Let the children of Kent street and the Mint witness, how many of those wretched objects she has taken home, cleansed from their filth, clothed in decent apparel, recommended to situations, and rendered them useful and honorable members of society. Many times has the last shilling in the house been laid out for God's poor, trusting in him alone for a supply.

"As soon as the doctors had left her room, I approached the bedside, when she took me affectionately by the hand, and said, 'I bless God for this bed; I am an unworthy creature, and I look not for any temporal deliverance, for by sin I have forfeited all.' Her strength being exhausted, I begged her to say no more; and took occasion, the next day, when she was somewhat better, to ask her how she felt in her mind? She replied, that it was difficult for her to tell, for she was neither joyous nor distressed, yet she could say she had no other refuge but Christ. On Thursday she requested to see brother Sims. When he came, she said to him, 'I hope you will be a physician of value to my soul.' He replied, 'I am nothing without God.' 'Yes,' she said, 'I know it; but God does speak to his people through the

instrumentality of others.' He then spoke to her of the promises of God; when she added, 'I know it is true, but I want to feel; I know God is faithful, but, after all, I find it more easy to trust him for a crust, than with the salvation of my soul.' At another time she said, 'I have no other refuge, no other foundation, but Christ; I would not give up my hope, O no! for a thousand worlds.' In the evening she told one of her children to go down to her father, and kiss him for her, and tell him that these words came home with power and comfort to her mind:—

'All that his heavenly Father gives
His hand securely keeps.'

"On Friday morning, she said to me, 'My dear, let me have drink from your hands?' I then lifted up her head, and gave it to her. 'You have a great trial,' she continued; 'but I hope God will support you under it;' and then prayed that the Lord would graciously help and guide me. After remaining a few minutes silent, she broke out with these words:

'Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings!
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things,
Towards heaven, thy native place.

'Sun, and moon, and stars decay,
Time shall soon this earth remove;
Rise, my soul, and haste away
To seats prepared above.'

"She said but little after this. On Saturday morning her immortal part escaped from its prison, and took its flight, to mingle with kindred spirits in the bright realms of eternal day."

Her remains were interred in Unicorn-Yard burial-ground, Tooley street, and a vast number of the poor, whose temporal and spiritual interests she had endeavored to promote while living, followed her to her silent abode.

During the latter part of her life, Mrs. C. had paid particular attention to those poor unfortunate outcasts of society who infest the streets of the metropolis. These she was in the habit of bringing into her house, giving them articles of clothing, and exhorting them, with entreaties and tears, to abandon their vicious and immoral practices, and to enter the more delightful paths of piety, virtue and peace; and though she did not succeed in the accomplishment of her object, to the extent of her wishes, yet she had the satisfaction of knowing, that in more than one instance her endeavors were crowned with success; and the gratitude and respect which were evinced

at her funeral, by a multitude of those unhappy females, proved more grateful to the feelings of the bereaved and afflicted husband, than the highest encomiums upon her life and character.

While the lifeless remains of the dear partner of his days continued in the house, Mr. C. was somewhat composed. It is true, that he wept; but there was a calmness in his grief, and a dignity in his composure, which proved that his mind was under the special control and influence of his faith in the promises of the gospel; but when the hour was come that he was to deposit the desire of his eyes in the cold and silent tomb, he became convulsed with grief, and his silent sorrow was exchanged for bitter lamentations. His friends strove to console him, but in vain; he refused to be comforted, and said, "I will go down into the grave unto my wife mourning."

This overwhelming calamity was but the forerunner of others, if not equally distressing, yet, coming as they did, pressing one upon the heels of another, proved so severe as to shake his reason almost to the very foundation. He had scarcely returned from the grave of his wife, when he was informed that a Christian friend, for whom he had made himself responsible to a considerable amount, was unable to

meet his engagements. On a sheet of paper, containing the registry of the births and deaths of his family, he makes this remark:—

"The thirteenth child died in the birth, and was buried with his mother.

"November 19th, 1808.—Here I stand, bereft of a pious, loving wife, the excellency of all that was lovely, with six children; also a returned accommodation-bill, which I endorsed for a friend, for £100, expecting to be arrested every moment; in a state of distress unknown to any one but to God; with a heart as insensible as steel,—no spirit to pray, and fretting against the providence of the Almighty."

After this distressing bereavement, he would not allow the window-shutters to be opened. He could not settle down to business. The sight of his work-room served only to remind him of her who was his discreet counsellor, his improving example, and the guardian of his interests and happiness. He, therefore, soon after quitted his house, and took up his abode again in Bermondsey street. His mind, however, still continued in a fearful state of agitation; and all his actions, for several months, showed that he was not in a condition to manage his own affairs. Nearly the whole stock of his children's apparel was given away

with the greatest indiscretion; and, having no person to guide or restrain him, he became the dupe of the wary and designing.

But the storm had no sooner began to subside, than another seemed ready to burst upon his head. Shortly after the death of his wife, he received a letter from the schoolmaster, under whose tuition his son (the writer of this memoir) was placed, residing near Dunstable, informing him that, in consequence of an accident, it was rendered necessary that the hand of the child should be amputated. Immediately on receipt of this letter, he put on his hat, and, with feelings which it is impossible to describe, hurried on foot to his suffering child, and, though a distance of upwards of thirty miles, he arrived at the school-house in the afternoon. Here, however, the Lord was better to him than his fears. His son, being brought to London, and placed under the care of Sir A. Cooper, was, after a considerable time, restored with the loss of only part of a finger.

In 1810, most of his children being very young, and his business calling him much away from home (being now employed, almost entirely, in conducting benefit societies), he was strongly urged by his friends to marry.

With this advice he thought proper to comply, and was united to a respectable widow, who made it her chief study to render her home comfortable, and her husband happy.

About a month after this union, Mr. C. was called to witness the death of his youngest son, then in the fifth year of his age. This was a child of great promise, and his fond father looked forward to his entrance on the stage of public life with the most enthusiastic expectations. But, while gazing on the beauteous prospect which his fancy had sketched, and anticipating the period when the visions of the imagination should be turned into visible realities, suddenly a cloud overcast the radiant sky —the desolating storm arose—and, in a moment, beat down, and destroyed the fond object of his attachment. His repeated trials awakened general sympathy, and many came to condole with him, among the foremost of whom was his old and tried friend Mr. Burchett.

All the Lord's people are not permitted to be tossed about in such a whirlpool of affliction, but many are; and it is frequently the lot of those whom he designs to honor with eminent usefulness. It is in this school of affliction that they acquire the tongue of the learned, and an ability to speak a word in season. In-

structed by what they themselves have passed through, they are taught to sympathize with their fellow-sufferers, and to "weep with those that weep." And when they have been "brought from the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and their feet set on a rock," the remembrance of their past conflicts is sanctified, to keep them humble, watchful, and dependent in their future course.

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown:
No traveller e'er reached that blest abode,
Who found not thorns and briers in the road.
The world may dance along the flowery plain,
Cheered as they go by many a sprightly strain,
Where nature has her mossy velvet spread,
With unshod feet they yet securely tread;
Admonished, scorn the caution and the friend,
Bent upon pleasure, heedless of its end.
But He who knew what human hearts would prove,
How slow to learn the dictates of his love;
That, hard by nature, and of stubborn will,
A life of ease would make them harder still;
In pity to the sinners he designed
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
Called for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said, 'Go, spend them in the vale of tears.'"

CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE DEATH OF HIS YOUNGEST SON, TO THE PREACHING OF MR. HILL IN THE MINT.

In the latter end of 1809, Mr. Cranfield was called to mourn the death of his friend and coadjutor, Mr. Sims. This gentleman, when he entered the school, was but a novice in the things of God, and seemed to engage in the instruction of the children more out of friendship to those with whom he acted, than from an ardent desire for the salvation of souls. Mr. C., aware of this, embraced every opportunity of explaining to him the nature and importance of the work in which he was engaged, and the necessity of seeking that divine aid, without which all his exertions would be as water spilt upon the ground. He wrote him letters; proposed subjects for his consideration, upon which he requested his sentiments in writing, and associated him in his visits to the beds of the sick and the dying, and by these means he became more enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, and was taught to engage

in the delightful service of his Lord and Saviour with a pure desire to promote his glory in the world. The progress he made in the school of Christ was great.

The remains of this excellent man were followed to the grave by a long line of male and female teachers, and were buried near those of his esteemed friend and fellow-laborer, Mr. Nixon, at Collyer's Rents. The spectators were addressed by the Rev. Rowland Hill, who, standing on a tomb-stone, wept as he pointed to the grave of his departed friend, and exclaimed, "There lies an honest shoemaker."

This loss was quickly followed by another, still more severe, occasioned by the death of his valued and long-tried friend, Mr. Burchett, a man full of good works; whose pity and compassion were ever excited towards his suffering fellow-creatures; and whose whole benevolence was exerted in relieving their wants, and in warning every man, and beseeching every man, as in the sight of God, with all patience and long-suffering, to seek the Lord while he might be found, and to call upon him while he is near. He was rich in good works, rich in heavenly tempers, but inexpressibly richer in his Saviour's righteousness. Mr C. never

thought that he could speak too highly of his worth and character. In a letter to a friend, he says,

"His love for souls was great. How earnestly did he entreat the children in his addresses to them, to be reconciled to Christ! How lovingly did he set the Saviour forth, in all his exalted perfections, offices, and characters! How fervent were his prayers for the rising race! How tenderly did he deal with the sick and distressed! No abode of the wretched was too mean for him to visit; and whenever he saw an opportunity of doing good, he always embraced it. If the children or parents were naked, he clothed them; if they wanted covering for their bed, he provided it; if they wanted medical assistance, he sent a doctor; if they wanted wine when nature was exhausted, his cellar was open to them; did they want friendly advice, he imparted it; in short, I never knew any case of distress come under his notice, without his purse being opened for its relief.

"His remains were interred in Bunhill fields; and his death was improved by the Rev. J. Campbell, at Kingsland, from Phil. 1: 23; and at Kentish Town, from Psalm 63: 26."

The wind and storm of trouble, which in its fury had well-nigh overwhelmed Mr. C., hav-

ing subsided, he began again to experience the peace of God which passeth all understanding, filling him with joy that is unspeakable, and full of glory; and, like the mariner, who has long been detained on shore through the violence of contrary gales, again weighed anchor, and set forward on his career of usefulness. He began to visit the prisons of the metropolis; and the misery and distress which he witnessed, afforded him ample scope for the employment of his active and benevolent mind.

The circumstance which directed his attention to these abodes of depravity and wretchedness, was the distress exhibited by an interesting female betrothed to a young man then under sentence of death in Horsemonger-lane gaol. She came to Mr. C., and making known the circumstances of the case, requested him to use his endeavors in obtaining a commutation of punishment. The act for which the criminal was doomed to suffer, was of a comparatively trivial nature, but in those days of ignorance and vice, the sanguinary code of laws was executed with rigor and severity. Mr. C. visited him in his cell, obtained such particulars as were necessary for enabling him to frame a petition, and then proceeded in his

work of mercy with extraordinary diligence and perseverance. He first waited on the Secretary of State, and, being assured of the prompt attention of the government, he returned to the prison to wait the issue of his application. He had not been there long, before he received the distressing intelligence from the governor, that he had orders to erect the fatal scaffold. This information served only to redouble his diligence. Knowing the high esteem in which the Right Hon. R. B. Sheridan was held by the Prince Regent, he procured a letter of recommendation to that gentleman, and, accompanied by Mr. Doxsey, he repaired with it to his house. Mr. Sheridan being from home, the papers were left, and he was requested to call the next day. The Sabbath now arrived, and the young man's funeral sermon was preached. Mr. C., however, still persevered, and after repeated applications, was admitted to a private interview with Mr. Sheridan, when he made such a forcible appeal in the culprit's behalf, as greatly interested his feelings, and elicited from him the promise of an immediate and personal application to the prince upon the subject. Mr. C. again returned to the prison, and in the

evening, to his unspeakable satisfaction, an officer knocked at the gate with a reprieve.

This merciful interposition of the royal prerogative, naturally awakened in the unfortunate man a lively feeling of gratitude towards the individual who had so kindly interfered on his behalf.

Notwithstanding Mr. Cranfield had met with such extraordinary success, he was not entirely satisfied. The man, through reprieved, was still in confinement, and Mr. C. was resolved, if possible, to obtain his discharge. He went, therefore, again to Mr. Sheridan; and after encountering many difficulties, he at length obtained for the unhappy man an unconditional pardon, and brought him out of the prison to his own house, where the female to whom he was attached was waiting his arrival.

The meeting was deeply affecting; tears of joy were shed in abundance, and the poor man was so overcome with gratitude, that, after many ineffectual attempts to express his feelings, he at last threw himself upon the ground, and said to Mr. Cranfield, "There, sir, come and walk over me." Soon after this, he married, and left London, and Mr. C. never saw or heard of him afterwards.

Towards the close of the year 1811, Mr. Cranfield having much business at Walworth, removed with his family to that place, and, notwithstanding the distance, his attendance at the Sabbath school was as punctual and regular as ever, nor were his endeavors to turn young sinners to righteousness in the slightest degree abated. His mind was constantly on the watch for fresh methods of gaining the children's attention, and improving their minds. Having, about this time, heard Mr. Walker deliver a lecture on astronomy, it struck him that the subject might be so simplified as to be brought down to the capacities of the young. He communicated his ideas to the teachers; and Mr. Elton, one of the number, undertook to deliver a lecture in the school, while Mr. C. was to compose a catechism for the children. All things being in readiness, the parents were invited, and the contemplations of the assembly were raised to those sublime works of the great Creator, which the regions of the sky contain, and the midnight hour unveils. After this, the elder children were taught to repeat the lecture, while the younger repeated the catechism. These exhibitions were continued every winter during several succeeding years; and as Mr. C. was continually improving his

scenery, it is supposed, that the apparatus, at different times, did not cost him less that £50. Whether these lectures were the means of producing any saving impressions on the minds of the children or parents, has not been ascertained; it is certain that they were instrumental in increasing the number of scholars. But as a consideration of the heavens, the work of God's fingers, and the moon and stars which he has ordained, is so admirably adapted to raise the mind to the contemplation of him "who is the Maker of them all," it may be presumed that these lectures were not delivered in vain.

In all his plans for the improvement of the children, an especial regard was paid to their spiritual welfare. All their little treats and amusements were made subservient to this one object; and on this he constantly and steadily fixed his eye. It was for this purpose that he now assembled them together twice in the week, and taught them writing and ciphering. One hour was occupied in these secular pursuits, and the remainder of the time devoted to religious exhortations. In this work he was ably assisted by Mr. Kesterton. This zealous and affectionate friend of children and of Sabbath schools, long since entered into his rest,

but his name is embalmed in the memories of numbers who have listened to his pious and instructive conversation, and have been benefited by his holy example.

About the year 1813, Mr. Cranfield having no longer any engagements at Walworth, removed to King street, Southwark, and joined the church at Surrey Chapel, where he was actively employed in doing good, as heretofore, in the Mint district.

In the year 1824, Mr. Cranfield, being anxious to know the state of education, perambulated the neighborhood, making inquiries in different parts as to the number of families in a house, and the number of children in each family. From the information he received, he drew an average of the probable number of children in the Mint; and then went round to the various schools, to ascertain how many scholars, in each, resided in that district. The following is the result of his inquiries and calculations:—

The number of houses in the interior of the Mint is 1040; the number of families occupying those houses, 2973; the number of children from five to sixteen years of age, reckoning two and a quarter to each family, 6689; the number of children receiving instruction in the

various charity, national, Lancasterian, and Sabbath schools, 2457. So from this statement it would appear that there were 4232 children living without instruction.

This information so discouraged and distressed him, that for some time he could not take his usual rest. It appeared to him as though he had labored to no purpose. His energies and spirits seemed greatly to decline, and he began seriously to think of abandoning the cause in despair.

In July, 1824, while indulging these gloomy reflections, an annual meeting of the teachers connected with the Southwark society, took place at the Grove House, Camberwell, at which he communicated the result of his inquiries, and the effect it had produced on his mind. The Rev. Mr. Elliott, of Devizes, who then occupied the chair, took up the subject, and stated that the paper which had been read spoke volumes. He called upon the meeting not to allow such a state of things any longer to exist; but to unite all their energies in attacking this strong-hold of ignorance and vice. "And above all things," continued he, with great animation, "never let the old soldier throw away his sword." It is impossible to describe the effect that this well-timed obser-

vation had upon Mr. C.'s mind. He arose from his despondency like a "giant refreshed," and early the next morning he was at his writing-table, dividing the Mint into districts, and forming fresh plans for bringing the children to receive instruction.

The important statement made by Mr. C., having been publicly contradicted, he determined upon a more minute inquiry. A complete map of the Mint was drawn, with all its lanes, courts, streets, and alleys, and the number of houses and families, with the children in each, ascertained by actual inquiry at every dwelling. This work occupied him and his son for several weeks; and at the close of the inquiry, he found that he had rather under than over-stated the numbers. In some houses two and even three families were found occupying one room; and in some of the lodging-houses there were nearly one hundred inmates, of whom very few indeed were able to read. These lodging-houses were kept principally for the use of poor travellers; but in some of the better regulated of them, there were a great many constant residents, who paid from two to three-pence per day for their accommodation. Some idea of the magnitude of this undertaking, and the state of the popu-

lation in this district, may be obtained from the perusal of the following document which he addressed to a friend:—

"DEAR SIR,—The statement that I made at the teachers' meeting, having been denied, I thought it my duty to go round the neighborhood again, and to be a little more minute in my inquiries, and the result fully establishes the facts then made known."

It is believed that scarcely any other person than Mr. Cranfield could have gained this information. When his son proceeded with the inquiry without his father, he was sure to be insulted; and very few, indeed, would answer a single inquiry. But there was something so prepossessing in Mr. C.'s appearance, and he was so universally known, that he readily obtained that information which another would have failed to procure.

The lodging-houses having been thus brought under his notice, he felt desirous of introducing the gospel among the inmates. He, therefore, prevailed upon the proprietor of one of these houses, in which there were 100 lodgers, to consent to have the place licensed for the performance of public worship. This was done, and several ministers supplying at

Surrey and Union street Chapels, proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to this poor, but now orderly society of men.

Mr. Cranfield now spent much time, on the week days, in teaching the inmates to read, and explaining to them the different portions of the Holy Scriptures. After a short time, this place was taken under the superintendence of the "Union street Christian Instruction Society," though Mr. C. still continued to attend it as one of the Society's agents.

The following extract of a letter to Mr. W. Jones, the respected Secretary of the Tract Society, will show not only his care and attention towards the inmates of the lodging-houses, but, also, the extent to which the good seed of the word of life was sometimes scattered by the winds of providence, through his agency.

"Dear Sir,—I take this opportunity of acknowledging your kindness in furnishing me with a grant of tracts; they have been distributed, some at the Cape of Good Hope, others among my wretched neighbors; but the greater part at the lodging-house. Some of these inmates carry the word of life wherever they go. One man, to whom I gave a bundle of tracts,

distributed them in every town and village he passed through in his travels; and another, in his journey to Scotland and back, left one at every lodging-house at which he stopped. Thus far, sir, I have sowed the seed, and am watering it with prayer. I am now looking for the harvest; but it may not be in my life-time. One thing I am persuaded of—it will not return void. No, the lip of truth hath said it; therefore, I am thankful that I am enabled to leave it in the hands of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. Mr. Hill said to me the other day, 'You must ferret these poor creatures out of their holes.' 'But, sir,' I replied, 'it is impossible; they will not come out.' 'Then,' said he, 'you must take the gospel to them.' These were the words of Mr. Hill. Now that the orders of this holy man may be put into execution, I call upon you, sir, to give them an address on the first Sabbath in the next month, at three o'clock."

During the time he resided in King street, Mr. Cranfield paid frequent visits to the various prisons in the metropolis, especially to that in Horsemonger lane, where he was sometimes admitted to the condemned cell, and preached Christ crucified to the unfortunate

malefactors. Having heard one day, that a poor man in this prison was ordered to be executed for robbery and assault, Mr. C. resolved to visit him. He accordingly repaired to Horsemonger lane, and was admitted to the prisoner's apartment. The young man was pacing the room with hurried and unmeasured steps; but what was the surprise of Mr. Cranfield, when the prisoner turned round, and, with a look of astonishment, mentioned his name. Mr. C. soon found that he was one of the old scholars of the Mint, who had been seduced from the path of virtue by the wicked spirits who move about seeking whom they can destroy, and that he entertained no hopes of mercy. His appearance was not that of the hardened and unsubdued felon, treating with contempt the utmost power of the law; but that of the broken-hearted penitent, who would gladly retrace his steps, and return to the order and purity of domestic life. "Oh, sir," said the young man, "would that I now were sitting on the form where you used to instruct me! If I had listened to your admonitions, I should not have now," pointing to his fetters, "been in this wretched condition." Then rising from his seat, which he had upon the entrance of his teacher resumed, and clasping

his hands together with a look of unutterable agony and despair, cried, "Oh, how I hated instruction, and refused to listen to the voice of my teachers!" Mr. C. was greatly affected at this melancholy spectacle; he mingled his tears of sympathy with the prisoner's tears of bitter sorrow, and endeavored, by the consolations of religion, to inspire him with the hope of obtaining mercy at the hands of the Lord, from whom he had grievously departed.

Not satisfied, however, with administering cordials to his afflicted soul, Mr. C. determined to use his exertions, to prevent the extreme penalty of the law from being inflicted on his body. Having furnished himself with the necessary information, he drew up a petition to the Secretary of State, in which the prosecutor joined in recommending mercy. On the following day, however, he was somewhat discouraged, by observing in the public prints, that the Surrey magistrates had vainly endeavored to interfere in the prisoner's behalf; still he persevered. He waited on the Rev. Rowland Hill; and so far influenced him in favor of the criminal, as to obtain from him a recommendatory letter to an influential member of the privy council, and eventually, the sentence was changed into transportation for

life; but not until the fatal apparatus was erected for the culprit's execution, and his funeral sermon preached. The exertions, however, of Mr. C. did not terminate here: he drew up another petition, praying his majesty not to suffer the young man to be sent out of the country; and, after a vast deal of trouble, he was informed that the prisoner would only be sent to the hulks, at Woolwich. The last time Mr. Cranfield saw him, he appeared to be truly penitent, and was paying a respectful attention to the claims of religion. Mr. C. used frequently to mention a circumstance that happened about this time, and which greatly interested him. One morning, being at the house of Mr. Justice Bailey, on behalf of a young man under sentence of death, he saw the servants, who had been to family worship, descending the stairs with their Bibles in their hands. "Here," thought he, "I shall be sure to succeed; for this is the house of a Christian; and piety and mercy always go hand in hand." He was not deceived; the representations that he made were such as to induce that enlightened judge to recommend the prisoner to his majesty's mercy. The young man was then ordered to be transported for life; he again interfered, and the

government consented to his remaining at Chatham. A third time he petitioned for a mitigation of punishment, and the prisoner was then removed into the penitentiary at Millbank; from thence, he was some time afterwards liberated, and is now occupying a respectable and confidential situation in the country.

These are not the only instances in which he succeeded in saving the lives of his fellow-creatures, which had been forfeited to the laws of his country; others, of an interesting character, might be added. Indeed, the numerous cases in which Mr. C. exerted himself, for the purpose of rescuing his fellow-creatures from the severity of the criminal-law, would alone furnish sufficient matter for a volume. His drawers were filled with petitions to government, and briefs to counsel, on the latter of which various sums of from one to three guineas paid were marked, and on nearly all of which the verdict of "not guilty" was recorded. These sums were often paid out of his own pocket, besides expenses of attending the Maidstone, Kingston, and other assizes. His success in these undertakings was truly astonishing; indeed, he never was known entirely to fail in any case which he undertook. The reason was this; he always commenced

the work with fervent prayer, and, having implored God's assistance in the undertaking, he proceeded with a resolution and perseverance, which were only increased by difficulties and stimulated by opposition. His love for mankind prompted him to view their miseries with grief and compassion, and to embrace every favorable opportunity of procuring relief; and thus he endeavored to follow the footsteps of him "who is kind to the unthankful and to the evil," causing his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust.

In the Fleet prison, he introduced a weekly prayer-meeting, which was held several months in the room of Mr. Smith, who had been for a number of years confined for contempt of court, and whose sufferings and imprisonment subsequently furnished matter for much comment in the daily newspapers, and were such as to excite the sympathies of the public. These meetings were made a blessing to many. A short time since, the son of Mr. Smith was met by one of Mr. Cranfield's daughters, and, after making inquiries respecting her father's welfare, he said, "Tell him how much obliged to him I feel for having conducted the prayer-meeting in our room. I was then a thoughtless young man, and loved more the game of rackets

than the study of my Bible; but, through his instrumentality, I have been enabled to discover my sin and danger, and am now constant in my attendance on the means of grace. I shall have reason to bless God as long as I live, that his attention was ever directed to our prison."

About the year 1828, his calls to attend the beds of the sick and dying in the Mint, becoming much more frequent, and being then in his seventy-first year, he removed altogether to the Mint, and took up his abode in the very centre of the place that had been now for nearly thirty years the scene of his labors. Here he employed himself in going about from house to house; inquiring into the state of education among the children, exhorting the inhabitants to attend the means of grace; visiting the sons and daughters of affliction, and pouring the balm of consolation into their troubled spirits. Having now an income barely sufficient for his own maintenance, he had but little to give to the poor. When, therefore, he met with any peculiar case of distress, he was in the habit of relieving it with what money he had in his possession, and placing it to the Lord's account (as he termed it); he then made out a statement of the case,

and sent it to some more affluent friend, and he soon became possessed of sufficient funds, not only to balance the account, but also to secure a surplus for the further relief of the sufferer.

His son, calling upon him one day, saw some figures chalked over his fire-place, and jocosely asked him if he had got a public-house score there? "No," he replied, "that is the Lord's score. I have been laying out a little money to purchase bread, coals and other necessaries, for some of his children; and when I put it up to his account, he invariably pays it with interest." Upon this persuasion he always acted, and never for a moment hesitated to lay out his very last shilling for the relief of the distressed, especially of those who were of the household of faith; and his idea of this household comprehended all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and was not limited by any regard to denominations, parties or systems.

In the winter seasons, Mr. Cranfield spent much of his time in collecting supplies for the relief of the poor; and with the money which he obtained, he purchased bread, rice, potatoes, sago, and the necessary ingredients for soup; and in this work he was generally busily

engaged during the whole of the frosty weather. The Rev. Rowland Hill, who used to style him the "Bishop of the Mint," assisted him greatly in his benevolent schemes, not only by contributions from his own purse, but also by recommendations to various members in his congregation, who were in possession of this world's goods.

The plan which he adopted in affording relief was this; when persons applied for assistance, he took down their names and addresses, and visited them at their own homes; he then spoke to them upon the concerns of their souls; inquired if they had a Bible, if they attended a place of worship, or sent their children to a Sabbath school; and, after satisfying himself of the deserving character of the applicants, a ticket was given them, with which they called on him the next day, and received such supplies as their cases demanded.

In detailing the proceedings of one of these days, he makes the following remark:—"Distributed seventy-seven loaves of bread, and seventy-five quarts of good rich soup. The whole business was completed within one hour, without the least confusion. Never was a benefit received with such expressions of gratitude. Several of the poor creatures, when

receiving the food, had their faces bedewed with tears. One woman, who had not tasted food for two days, wept aloud for joy. The sight was too affecting to behold. Several of them were the Lord's poor, and of the fifty-one individuals who received this temporary supply, only two had any allowance from the parish."

Much good was done in this way, and many were thereby induced to attend the means of grace; but as others, through want of decent apparel, were ashamed to repair to public places of worship, Mr. C. prevailed upon the Rev. Rowland Hill to preach a sermon to them at the Sabbath school; with which request he complied, and the place was filled almost to suffocation. His example was followed by others, especially by some who were training for the work of the ministry, while Mr. Cranfield generally officiated as clerk. At his solicitation, however, the evening service at this place was afterwards taken under the superintendence of the Committee of the Surrey Chapel Christian Instruction Society, through whose instrumentality the glorious gospel of the Son of God is now regularly preached, every Sabbath, to the poor of the Mint.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE PREACHING OF MR. HILL IN THE MINT, TO THE DEATH OF HIS LAST WIFE.

When the plan of infant instruction was published to the world, Mr. Cranfield hailed it as a harbinger of brighter days. He foresaw that many who would not allow their children to attend a Sabbath school, would be glad to have a place where they could send them on the week-days, while they were engaged from home in their ordinary occupations; and thus, not only the children, but the parents, through them, might be instructed in the things which make for their everlasting happiness. Having, therefore, obtained permission from the Committee of the Southwark Sunday School Society, to instruct the infants in the Mint-school, he, on the 5th of July, 1830, opened that place for the reception of infants, who attended in great numbers; and, although in his seventy-third year, he proceeded in the work with all the ardor and energy of a young man. He visited several infant schools to observe their proceedings, and, having obtained much valu-

able information, he returned home, to mark out a course for himself. His first aim was to instruct the children in a thorough knowledge of the word of life, with most of the histories, incidents, doctrines, and precepts therein contained. He composed catechisms on a number of interesting subjects, such as the journeying of the children of Israel, the lives of Christ, Joseph, David, and of all the kings of Israel and Judah. He taught them the Jewish weights and measures; engaged them in making various measurements in the street, and on the school-floor, such as of Noah's ark, Og's bedstead, and the stature of Goliath; and by these means the children obtained a wonderful knowledge of the historical part of the word of God.

The intellectual instruction of his scholars he made only a secondary object. Once a quarter he assembled the parents, to witness the progress of their children; and on these occasions, he would endeavor to get the Rev. Rowland Hill, or some other pious friend, to preside, and deliver an address. Mr. Hill, at the first, did not approve of these infant seminaries; but when he witnessed the children's knowledge of the Scriptures, and found, from actual examination, that that knowledge

was not so superficial as he expected to find it, his opinions underwent an entire change, and he declared that the introduction of the infant school into the Mint, was one of the greatest blessings that could have been conferred on the inhabitants.

These quarterly meetings proved extremely interesting, and were generally attended by a number of respectable persons; this was especially the case on one occasion, when Mr. Hill presided. O, it was a delightful treat to see the two aged pilgrims, surrounded by a motley group of upwards of one hundred infants, whom they were endeavoring, with lively zeal and animation, to lead to the Saviour. The contrast here exhibited of youth and age, would have afforded an admirable subject for the pencil; and the ample supply of buns, biscuits, and reward-books, standing in the back-ground, to which the glistening eyes of the children were ever and anon directed, would have served to render the picture complete. After the service, the two venerable friends sat and conversed upon by-gone days, when mention was made of their labors at Kingsland. "That was a long time ago," said Mr. Hill; "why, how old are you, Mr. Cranfield?" "Seventy-hree," answered the latter; "few and evil

have been the days of my pilgrimage." "*Only* seventy-three," replied Mr. Hill, with his accustomed drollery; "then you are but a *chicken* to me." The revered minister seemed much delighted with this meeting, and, but for his increasing infirmities, he would have repeated his visit.

Most humiliating views he had of himself, with intense breathings of heart after God, in the midst of business, and while surrounded by upwards of one hundred little children. During the time he was engaged in this school, no less than two thousand children passed under his instruction, some of whom, although very young in years, died, leaving behind them very satisfactory evidences of their meetness for the heavenly kingdom. Particularly was this the case with a little girl five years old, and a boy six, who both were the means of their mothers' conversion. The latter child died while in the exercise of prayer. Mr. Cranfield, in writing to a friend, detailing an account of his success, closes with the following remark:—

"Permit me to say, that I have spent thirty-three years in endeavoring to instruct the children of the poor in this neighborhood, and have seen the fruits of those instructions in

the salvation of many; but my past labors appear as lost, in comparison with what I anticipate from the effects of infant school instruction, when my head will be laid low in the grave."

Much of his time was occupied, between school hours, and on half-holidays, in visiting the parents, to whom he always sent tracts by the children, and exchanged them weekly. These visits were frequently made instrumental in enlightening their minds in the knowledge of Christ, and several died happy in the Lord. Some of these death-bed scenes were of so interesting and encouraging a nature, that it would be almost criminal to pass them over in silence.

He was sent for to visit a poor sick woman, who had two children in the Mint school. She was in the last stage of a decline, caused by a cold taken in her confinement. In answer to the visiter's questions, she said that "she had a good hope she should go to heaven, because she had always acted uprightly, and could not reproach herself with being guilty of a single immoral act; and that, after all her afflictions in this life, she could not believe that God would refuse to receive her to himself when she died." Upon his further questioning her,

she said that it was true she had neglected the worship of God, and the concerns of her soul; but then her domestic duties were so many, and so pressing, that she could not find time for the former, without neglecting the latter. Seeing the awful delusion under which she was laboring, he warned her of her danger, and endeavored, by the assistance of God the Spirit, to awaken her to a true sense of her spiritual condition. After some conversation, he read to her the third chapter of Romans, and further explained to her how she was held under the power of sin, and the curse of the broken law. His visits were repeated several times without any apparent success; and, being greatly concerned lest she should perish without an interest in the Saviour, his visits were repeated more frequently, and he spent much time in secret prayer on her behalf. At length, it pleased the Lord to open her eyes, and to turn her from darkness unto light, when she became greatly concerned about her soul; her guilt pressed heavily upon her, and she cried out, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me!" Shortly before her death, when he entered the room, she took his hands in hers, and said, "God bless you, my dear sir, for all your attention to me. You have been

the means of saving my soul. Farewell; I am going to my Father's house. Blessed be his holy name, he has pardoned all my sins. When you first visited me, and told me of my sinful state, you made me tremble, though I could not see the justice of your remarks; but, blessed be his holy name, he has not only showed me my sins, but he has washed them in redeeming blood." The remainder of this account must be given in his own words:—

"*Wednesday*.—This was indeed a day of the Son of Man. She seemed delighted as I entered; and, having helped her to a little drink, she took me by the hand, and began to converse with such freedom, as both delighted and astonished me. 'I have no hope,' she said, 'but in Him that died on the cross. O no, no, no! none but Jesus could pardon me. He has done it; and, blessed be his name, he is a Saviour of sinners, yea, the vilest of them. There is none other name given under heaven whereby they can be saved. Glory, glory be to his dear name. O sir, Jesus Christ is everything; none but he could do sinners good. May he bless you, and bless your instructions to my children.' I now entreated her to be silent, as I was sure her weak frame could not long support such exertion. 'No, no,' she

said, 'I must speak of Jesus; I love to speak of him, for he has saved my soul;' and she thus went on, until nature at length became exhausted, and her tongue could no longer discharge the office which her grateful heart was still desirous it should perform. Having read the 103d Psalm, and engaged in prayer, I bade her farewell; and went home, with my heart glowing with gratitude and joy, having witnessed one of the most delightful scenes which can possibly interest the heart of a Christian. Never in my life did I have the gospel preached to me with such force and power, as it was by this poor emaciated creature. On Sunday morning, at seven o'clock, I was sent for, as it was thought her departure was then at hand. 'A few minutes,' said I, 'and you will be at your Father's house.' She moved her lips, as if desirous of speaking; but the power of utterance was for ever gone. I asked her if Jesus was still precious to her soul; if so, to lift up her hand; which she immediately did. I called again at twelve o'clock, and found her still in the body. I spoke to her of the presence of Christ in the valley of the shadow of death, and asked her if she still felt him near, and if so, again to hold up her hand; she accordingly held it up.

and waved it in a kind of triumph. I visited her again at a quarter to two, and just as I entered the room, her happy spirit departed."

In August, 1834, he was sent for to visit a dying man, near to the school; and, as usual, asked him if he had been in the habit of attending the means of grace? "Yes," he replied, "I am a churchman; and was in the habit of attending the church, until I heard that the parson had a great salary, while the poor curate, who did all the work, had but little. I then left, and read my Bible at home, as I knew as much as the parson could tell me." Mr. C. visited him constantly for three weeks, when light began to break in upon his mind, and he was at length convinced that his righteousness was as filthy rags. A little halfpenny book, entitled, "The Cloud, look beyond it," was given to him, which afforded him much support and consolation, and was the theme of his conversation for several days. Being asked what his soul breathed after most, during his wearisome days and nights, he made a long pause, and then said, "It breathes after a solid holiness of heart. I want sin out of me." On the day of his decease, Mr. Cranfield says, "I visited him about noon, and seeing he could not continue many hours

I said, 'You are walking in the dark vale of death. Are you looking beyond the cloud?' His answer was, with a low voice, 'I am looking THROUGH the cloud.' These were his last words to me. I asked him if he found his mind supported by the word and the Spirit of God? He gave me his hand, with a sign that it was. After prayer, seeing his mouth parched, I went to procure him a little jelly; but, before I returned, his soul was departed, I hope, to be with Jesus."

The last case selected, is one that made so powerful an impression on his own mind, that he could scarcely think on any other subject for weeks afterwards. It shall be given in his own language:—

"I was called upon to visit a poor man, who had been confined to his room six weeks, and was supposed to be dying. The moment I was introduced, he sprang out of bed, and earnestly seized my hand, as though I had been an angel from heaven. His whole appearance was truly appalling; his hair stood up like one that was in the utmost state of alarm. His lips quivered, his knees trembled, and agony and despair were strongly expressed in his countenance. I begged of him to be composed, and to re-enter his bed; he seated

himself on the side of it, and, in a state of distraction, cried out, 'O, the burning lake! the burning lake!' I requested him to be silent, and to hear what I had to say; but he paid no attention to me, and continued to vociferate, 'O, the burning lake!—I saw their horrid countenances, and they told me that I should be there, and remain for ever and ever!' He again grasped my hand, and, gnashing with his teeth, continued to utter similar expressions. Dreadful as was this scene, I still pressed the man to hear me, if it was only for one moment, as I had good news to tell him; but all was in vain; he still continued to cry, 'O, the burning lake! I am the vilest sinner that ever lived! I shall go there, and be lost for ever!' 'Will you,' said I, at length, with great earnestness, 'hear me just for one moment, or not?' He then said, 'Well, sir, I will hear you,' and for a moment ceased. Seizing the opportunity, I said to him, 'Look on me, and listen to what I am about to say:—The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.' He looked at me with attention, and replied, 'But I am the greatest sinner that ever existed!' 'O,' said I, 'I will challenge you upon that score. I have been a soldier, and you know that soldiers in general

are very wicked; I have been a blasphemer.' 'So have I,' said the man. 'I have been a persecutor.' 'So have I.' 'I have,' said I, 'set at nought God himself, and would, if I could, have pulled him from his throne. Nay, I have been so alarmed on account of my sin, that I have been afraid the ground would open its mouth and swallow me up; but I obtained mercy, and so may you.' The man now ceased to reply; and I went on for about an hour, showing him, from God's word, his readiness to forgive. But the word seemed to make no impression on his mind; and after prayer I took my leave, having promised to visit him again. As I bade him farewell, he looked at me very earnestly, and said, 'I shall be dead, sir, before you see me again.' At six o'clock, I repeated my visit, and he appeared to be in the same state of mind, crying out that he should go to the lake. Since I had called in the morning, the Rev. Mr. Stevenson had visited him, but without any apparent success. After some conversation, I told him that I would go home, and pray for him, but that, at the same time, he must pray for himself. He replied that he could not pray. I then asked him as a favor, to say these words:—'God be merciful to me

a sinner,' and to keep on saying them until God should answer him, and pardon his sins. I returned home, with my mind deeply impressed with the awful scene I had witnessed. I retired to bed, but could not sleep; and I may say, that I continued nearly the whole of the night in prayer to God for him. In the morning, at nine o'clock, I hastened to the house again, not expecting to find him alive; but, behold, I saw him below stairs, 'clothed, and in his right mind,' with the Bible on his knees. I looked, and looked again, and with astonishment said, 'Am I deceived?' He answered, 'No; it is I. O, sir, I have had such a comfortable night as I never experienced before. I have lost the burden; blessed be God, here I am, with my precious Bible.' He then broke out with these words:—'And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.' 'Where,' said I, 'did you find that blessed scripture?' 'Here,' he replied, pointing to Malachi 3: 17, 'in my precious Bible.' After some delightful conversation, I engaged in prayer, and again took my leave; and the next day he went into the country for the benefit of his health, and I

saw him no more; for very soon after his arrival at the place of his destination, he died."

Being extremely anxious to learn his dying testimony, Mr. C. wrote to the minister who, he understood, had attended him in his last moments, from whom he received the following reply:—

"Clay, Jan. 28th, 1835.

"DEAR SIR,—I am sorry so much time has elapsed, with your letter unanswered. I was from home when it came, it being the Christmas vacation, and this is the first opportunity I have had since its termination. I saw Mr. W. but once since his last visit into the country, when I found him exceedingly ill, extremely ebilitated, and almost suffocated with phlegm. He referred to the circumstance you mention, but it was in broken sentences; and I could not understand it so fully from him as from your letter; but when I read your's to his mother, she said it was a just description of what he had told her. When I saw him, he seemed overwhelmed with a sense of his deep depravity, enormous guilt, and great unworthiness; and attributed it to divine long-suffering alone, that he was not then with the devil and his angels; and was frequently cry-

ing for mercy. I believed him to be a sincere penitent, for he expressed himself as having a knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. In this state I left him, and saw him no more."

In 1832, Mr. Cranfield, at the request of several of his friends, resigned the office of Superintendent of the Mint Sabbath school into the hands of Mr. John Smith, one of the teachers there, and employed his time on the Sabbath, during the intervals of worship, in visiting the various schools connected with the Society, and watching the progress of the cause of God in the Lodging-house.

In 1833, Mr. C. was much affected by the death of his friend and pastor, Mr. Hill. When intelligence was brought to him of the venerable saint's entrance into his rest, he clasped his hands together, and cried, "My father, my father! Ah," he continued, as his eyes filled with tears, "he is gone, and I only am left of all the early friends of the Southwark Sabbath School Society. God grant that like him, I may be faithful to the end, and die gloriously in the field." After the death of Mr. Hill, the church being without a settled pastor, he joined the congregation of the Rev. John

Arundel, to whose ministry he was greatly attached.

When the cholera, in 1833, appeared in London, it made frightful ravages among the inhabitants of the Mint; and Mr. C. was called out at all hours of the day and night. It is believed by his family, that he did not visit less than fifty persons who were afflicted with this dreadful disease, most of whom were objects of great wretchedness; and he obtained considerable sums from his friends for their relief. Some of these poor creatures died happy in the Lord; but many, it is feared, departed into eternity, without experiencing that change of heart, without which no man can see the Lord. One person whom he visited, was an old scholar, who had been connected with one of the leading infidels in London, and had imbibed his principles. The sight of Mr. C. seemed to increase his anguish: the powerful addresses he had heard him deliver, came to his mind, and filled him with unutterable despair. "I know, sir," said he, "that you will stand at the bar of God, as a witness against me; but it is now too late to repent." All the endeavors of his old teacher to bring him to Christ were unavailing; he died full of enmity to God, and cursing the miserable day on which he had

received existence. The mind of Mr. C. was greatly affected at this incident; and he made frequent use of it in warning young persons from associating with those who avoid all concern for a never-ending hereafter.

In April, 1834, Mr. C. was called to resign his wife into the hands of him from whom he had received her. She was a humble, unobtrusive Christian. She seldom left her home; and her greatest earthly delight seemed to consist in seconding her husband's efforts to relieve the poor and friendless. Frequently, for weeks together, she has sat up late at night, watching the soup-kettle, and has returned early in the morning, before the fire was extinguished, to the same occupation. Mr. C. bore up under this stroke of affliction, with wonderful fortitude and resignation: he sorrowed, indeed, but not as one that had no hope. Three days after her death, he wrote these words in his little memorandum-book: "Oh, who can be a substitute for my dear wife? My children are loving and kind, and so are my friends—but they are not my wife." And shortly after her funeral, he added, "I have buried her at Collyers Rents, in the hope of eternal life; and I trust shortly to lie by her side, till the resurrection morn."

As he was now in his seventy-seventh year, and required that care and attention, which it was supposed could not be so satisfactorily administered by strangers, each of his children, who was in a situation to do so, offered him a place under his roof, where he might spend the evening of his days in comfort and peace. This is mentioned merely to record his answer, which is every way characteristic of himself:— "I feel obliged for your kindness; but as you all live at a distance, you must excuse me from accepting your invitation. What would the poor infants do? Could I bear to see them rambling about the streets, like sheep having no shepherd? What would my poor and afflicted neighbors do? and, above all, what should I do? I should soon *rust out*, for want of some active employment; and I am too old now to break up fresh ground. No, no; let me continue in that sphere where I still may be made useful; and let me die in the midst of those with whom I have spent nearly half my existence. I desire to live no longer than I can be made useful to them." Under these circumstances, it was thought advisable that his daughter, who was then occupying a situation in the family of the Rev. W. Ellis, should come home, and attend upon her father, during the

remainder of his days, so that he might still watch over the temporal and spiritual interests of the poor, and exercise himself in his delightful occupation of comforting those that were cast down; of supplying the wants of the distressed, and of pointing them to that land of happiness and peace, where sorrow and sighing never enter, and tears are for ever wiped away.

"Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched, and wept, he prayed, and felt for all:
And as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies;
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."

CHAPTER IX.

LAST YEARS, DEATH, AND FUNERAL OF MR. CRANFIELD.

When the evening sun finishes his daily race, and appears to rest on the utmost verge of the western sky, his beams not only become milder and more glorious, but the radiant orb seems to increase in magnitude; while his lustre, darting horizontally on the verdant fields and restless floods, produces a scene of beauty and grandeur, deeply interesting to the mind of the beholder. But, while his eyes are gladdened with the mild splendor of the retiring sun, something like a regret steals upon his feelings, while reflecting that the object he beholds will shortly retire from his view, in order to distribute his inexhaustible beams among countries and inhabitants of another hemisphere. Such is the Christian, when about to take his departure from this vale of sorrow. His desires after God become increased and enlarged: the graces of the Christian character shine forth in him with more attractive splendor, and dignify, ennoble, and elevate his mind. The consciousness of

the nearness of his approach to the eternal world, gives a sobriety to his thoughts, a rationality to his anticipations; and his fellow-travellers, being animated by the hopes which he enjoys, are enabled to go on their way rejoicing. So was it with Mr. Cranfield. His sun, for some time previous to his departure, appeared evidently to be gradually going down; and it was with delight that his friends beheld him bringing forth fruit in extreme old age. Though almost eighty years had passed over his venerable head, yet his activity and usefulness were maintained with a considerable degree of his former animation, and he diffused life and bliss through the circle of social intercourse; while, by the force of his example, as well as the purity of his doctrines, he led on his friends to the verge of the celestial world.

After the death of his wife, being unable, at times, through a complaint in one of his feet, to visit those of his friends who lived at a distance, he held a weekly prayer-meeting at his own house, at which he delivered a short exhortation, and invited his friends to give their sentiments on the subject of his address. These meetings were productive of much good; they proved instrumental in the conversion of some, and in producing a higher tone of spirit-

uality in the hearts of others; and many who, like Hannah, came to the house of prayer with their souls bowed down with a weight of sorrow, went away with their countenances "no more sad." It is impossible to describe the interest which these meetings excited; the room was generally crowded with the poor of the neighborhood, and frequently his more affluent friends would enliven the evening with their presence and conversation. These meetings were held every Friday, till his death, and were commonly called by his friends "the *lifting* nights."

In 1836, Mr. Cranfield hailed with delightful satisfaction, the appointment of the Rev. James Sherman to the pastoral charge of the church at Surrey Chapel, and was among the first to have his name re-enrolled among the members. He lost no time in making known to Mr. S. the state of the Southwark Sabbath School Society, which then consisted of twelve schools, containing about two thousand six hundred children, and also solicited his patronage for the infant school, in the Mint. Mr. C. was much encouraged by the kind reception which he met, and, receiving afterwards a visit from the Rev. Mr. S. at the school, he was stimulated to increased exertions in his useful and delightful employment.

In the summer of 1837, he was much pleased by the opening of a large school in the Borough-road, which was built by the Southwark Society, for the purpose of uniting two of their schools in the neighborhood, then in a dilapidated state. Almost every day he walked to the spot to observe the progress of the building, and often held spiritual converse with those who, like himself, had come to witness the operations of the workmen. A circumstance occurred here one morning of so interesting a character, that he returned home, and wrote an account of it to Mr. Heward, the proposed superintendent of the school. The following is an extract from his letter:—

"June 13th, 1837.

"Dear Sir,—As I was reviewing the outside of the building in the Borough-road this morning, at seven o'clock, a decent-looking man came up to me, and mentioned my name. I did not know him, but he informed me that his name was Burns, and that it was near thirty years since he first entered the Mint school, being then about seven years of age. His wife, and another relative, were then scholars, with a youth named Wilson, all of whom I recollect. It pleased the Lord, after

he left the school, to incline his mind to attend the means of grace at the Wesleyan Chapel, Lambeth, where, he trusts, he was savingly called. Here he met with his school-fellow, and married her, and both are members of the same church. He informed me that Wilson, after he left the school, attended Queen street Chapel, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. His parents were unconverted; but the son being made acquainted with his fallen state, and brought to the knowledge of himself as a sinner, and of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, eventually became a preacher of the gospel. Wilson was now anxious for the salvation of his parents, and requested Burns to use his endeavors for the purpose of prevailing on them to attend the chapel at Queen street. This he did, and, with much difficulty succeeded in his object; but what was the surprise of the parents, on entering the chapel, to behold their own son in the pulpit! His text was, 'By one man sin entered into the world,' &c. It pleased the Lord to enable them to see and feel the guilt and misery of sin, and to fly to the Saviour. After the service, they returned to Burns' house, and in about two hours the son joined them. Burns says such a scene followed as his eyes never before witnessed.

There was weeping and rejoicing together, till a very late hour, and they experienced a heaven of joy and love. Wilson is now a missionary in Calcutta, preaching the gospel among the heathen. This evening, my heart was again gladdened by the information of a young person being brought to the knowledge of Christ through a prayer offered at the school. This person has since died happy in the Lord.

"I close this with my heart overpowered with gratitude, from a consideration of what my eyes and ears have seen and heard, of the blessing of God on Sabbath school instruction. When I first set out, Southwark and its vicinity was a wilderness—the place of dragons. But what do my eyes behold now? 'The wilderness and desolate place is too narrow by reason of its inhabitants.' 'Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into singing, O mountains! '*Lift—lift—lift* up thine eyes round about, and, behold, all these gather together and come to thee: (mark) 'As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with a garment,' (nay) *ornament*, 'and bind them *on* thee as a bride doth.' O, for faith, to credit what the Lord saith! I see that I am blundering on, but I know to whom I am writing.

"I close with the prayer and blessing of the high priest—'The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; and lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee and thine peace. "THOS. CRANFIELD."

As the day for opening the new school approached, Mr. C. evinced uncommon animation, and sent round to a number of friends an invitation to meet the teachers for prayer on the occasion. In a wrapper containing some particulars respecting the formation of the society, which he forwarded to Mr. Heward, he makes the following remarks:—

"I understand it will be your endeavor to bring up the ark into your building with prayer, at six o'clock. A temple without the ark, would be like a house without an inhabitant. There is every thing, both in the structure and furniture of our divine ark, that can sanctify and beautify the school; and from this ark alone, all future success must flow. May God own and accept your endeavors, and may your meeting be attended with the manifestation of his glory! O, yes! it will; for those who wait on the Lord in the ways of his appointment, will surely receive tokens of his special favor."

After the opening of the school, Mr. C. requested to have a select class of elder boys placed under his care; whom he might so instruct as to prepare them for the work of Sabbath school teaching. His request was granted, and, on entering upon this employment, he took each of his scholars on one side, and explained to them, individually, the object he had in view in selecting them from the other boys, and informed them that it was his intention to labor with them, and to pray for each of them by name, till they all were converted to God. This engagement was fulfilled with delightful zeal and solicitude up to the very last Sabbath he was permitted to spend on earth: and there is every reason to believe, that in one or two instances, the Lord has already blessed those labors, and answered those prayers.

The winter of 1837 being very severe, a powerful appeal was made from the pulpit by the Rev. J. Sherman, at Surrey Chapel, for the relief of the poor; and large sums were collected for their use. Mr. C. likewise obtained a considerable sum for the same purpose; and though he acted, in some measure, independently of the friends at Surrey Chapel, yet they assisted him much in

his benevolent object. With the money he thus obtained, he purchased rice, sago, and potatoes; and distributed them among the poor as they had need.

Strange as it may appear, at the very time he was thus relieving the poor, it was ascertained that he was a proper object for relief himself. A friend having privately intimated to Mr. Sherman that there was no doubt but a pair of blankets would be acceptable to Mr. Cranfield, Mr. S. lost no time in inquiring into the subject; and he found that his information was correct, for Mr. C., a short time previously, had given away part of his bedding to a poor woman that was lying-in. A pair of blankets were, therefore, instantly voted by the committee at Surrey Chapel for his use.

During the frosty weather, Mr. C. seldom went from home after dark, but employed himself in studying the Scriptures, writing catechisms for his select class, and instructing the lads occasionally at his own house. Much of his time was likewise occupied in writing short sentences on slips of paper, for the edification of his friends. These he called his "lottery tickets." He always carried a considerable number with him in his pocket-

book; and at social parties, or friendly visits, his friends were accustomed to draw one from the packet, and take it home for private meditation. The following are selected as specimens of his tickets:—

"Dear friend, there is a large estate left you. It is ratified, signed, and sealed. It is certain, if you can make out your relationship to the Testator, by a living faith. Are you a son? Then you are a partaker of the Divine nature, and have fellowship with the Father and the Testator. You are raised beyond your neighbors. You have already entered on your estate. O, how powerful is your interest and your prayers, in the government of the world. 'All things are yours, ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'

"Pray for THOS. CRANFIELD."

"Dear friend, beware of steel-traps and spring-guns. If you listen to the suggestions of the creature, however disguised by fair speech, rather than to the written commands of God, you will be ensnared as sure as you breathe. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Remember how it fared with your great-grandmother Eve. O, I tremble

for my young friends. Live close to God, and you will be safe."

It frequently happened that the subject of these papers was peculiarly adapted to the circumstances or state of mind of the individuals receiving them. The following was drawn by the driver of a cab, who in consequence of his vehicle breaking down had spent the evening at the prayer-meeting.

"Friend, you are invited to come in the chariot of love with Jesus; he will manifest his power and wealth, and will convey you to the heavenly country. He will conquer all that oppose. His promises are faithful and unchangeable. You are safe,—there is no fear of your falling out of his conveyance. In this chariot, how sweetly, how safely, how quickly, I ride to glory. Hasten the time, dear Lord."

The last one he wrote was to this effect:—

"Dear friend, admire the love of your heavenly Father toward you, in that he laid his Son on the altar on the first moment of his incarnation, Heb. 10: 5, continued him thereon the whole of his life, and completed it on the cross and in the grave. Isa. liii. Christ was

the great high Priest, Heb. 5: 5. Meditate on this awful transaction; and pray for Thomas Cranfield."

These little papers were held in such great request, that the demand could scarcely be supplied, even by the greater portion of his leisure time. His application to this work at length became so great, that he was afraid it impeded his usefulness in other respects, and he therefore determined on relinquishing it. But one of his young friends having described to him how greatly those written sentiments had been blessed to her soul, many of which she had copied and distributed among her friends, to whom also, in several instances, they had been made a blessing, he resolved still to continue this mode of conveying instruction, but to confine the circulation of his papers to his more intimate friends.

Some of the members of Surrey Chapel now considering that, from his advanced age, and the high esteem in which he was held by the poor of the mint, he was calculated to be more extensively useful, if his time were wholly employed in visiting and relieving the sick and afflicted, formed the design of subscribing together, to allow him ten shillings per week, to

assist him in this object, on condition that he would resign the charge of the infant school, and devote himself entirely to it. The plan being submitted to Mr. Sherman by the superintendent of the Mint school, it met with his cordial approval, and by his kind assistance it was speedily carried into effect. Mr. C., however, felt some reluctance in leaving his youthful flock, but under the circumstances he considered it his duty to comply with the wishes of his friends; and having taken an affectionate leave of the dear little lambs, whom he promised to visit occasionally at their own houses, he employed the greater portion of the remainder of his days in the delightful work of administering to the temporal and spiritual necessities of the diseased and wretched.

In March, 1838, Mr. Cranfield completed his eightieth year, the period which he often had intimated his wish to behold, provided he might continue till then useful to the church and the world: and with the exception of his left hand, which was considerably weakened, his frame remained steady and his limbs strong, insomuch that on errands of mercy he could generally walk a mile in about twenty minutes. The steadiness with which he wrote was remarked by every one; there was nothing in his hand-

writing that would have led a stranger to suppose that it was the performance of a man of eighty. As was his physical, so was also his mental and spiritual strength. It did not appear in the slightest degree impaired. His zeal, his perseverance, his knowledge of the Scriptures, his capacity for study, and his aptitude in leading off in a strain of useful conversation at the social party, were as great as ever.

In the following summer, his activity made him a wonder to many. His general health appeared to be much improved, and he was unweariedly employed in doing good: omitting no pains to alleviate the miseries of others, and using his influence with his friends, not for the advancement of himself or family, but to afford succor to the afflicted members of the church of Christ; though grace taught him to say, "Not unto me, but unto thy name be the glory."

Many of his friends now urged him to keep a diary of his experience and labors, but he replied, that such a document would savor so much of self, that he should commit it to the flames if he should write it. After many entreaties, however, in which his family united, he at length consented, but could not be induced by any persuasions, to continue it more than a

week. His remarks on each day's proceedings are so extended, that only an extract can be given to the reader.

"*Sabbath, June* 17, 1838.—Arose this morning at three o'clock; feeling myself ill, retired to bed again; arose at five, and after communion with my Protector, on behalf of myself, family and friends, proceeded at seven o'clock to Surrey Chapel in the spirit of prayer—partook of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. I found the presence of the Lord.—My soul more refreshed than at any season for many years; Mr. Sherman administered the ordinance,—returned home, and at breakfast had a profitable conversation. Read the seventh chapter of the second book of Chronicles,—had a good time in prayer. Went to the borough school,—met with Messrs. Heward, Churchill, and others. Mr. Churchill brought to my mind Boaz visiting the reapers. I then proceeded to the Mint school,—met Mr. Smith, and had some conversation on the genealogies in the first book of Chronicles,—then in the spirit of prayer went to Union street Chapel,—heard a stranger,—a most solemn sermon: 'What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' 'As ye go, preach.'

"On my way home, I passed through Red cross street,—met an aged woman with two of

her grand-children. She asked me how I did. I replied, In good health, and that I had heard a solemn sermon about the value of the soul. Her children were old scholars; they attend on the means. As to herself, she appeared indifferent about her soul. I left her with a word of exhortation. After this, saw one of the parents standing at the shop door, exposing her goods for sale; this woman has had twenty children, who have all received their education at the Mint school. I reproved her conduct, and told her that it would be an awful thing if her children should enter the kingdom of heaven, and she herself should be shut out. I then called upon a good woman, not seeing her at chapel,—found her poorly, and spoke to her about her soul. After dinner went to the Lodging house. On the road, met a man and his wife going to a prayer-meeting,—asked them of the welfare of their souls,—found them full of complaints. Came to the Mint school, found things going on well. Arrived at the Lodging house,—heard a good sermon by Mr. Forsyth, from Jer. 50: 5. Went to the Mint school, and addressed the children on the threefold office of Christ. Took tea at the Borough road school,—there were about fifty present,—Mr. Heward and myself addressed the company

about the soul. Returned home,—conversed with my son upon the priestly office of Christ, —catechized my grand-children, and closed the evening with singing and prayer. This was a good day, and profitable.

"*Monday*, 18*th*.—Arose before five o'clock. After prayer, meditated on the book of Chronicles; may I be like the Kenites!—join in with the children of God. Had a good time in family prayer. After breakfast went to Westminster, and on my return a decent woman accosted me, who was an old scholar, thirty years back! I spoke to her about her soul, but alas, the world and its business had carried her away after things that do not profit;—said to her, 'It will not do, Elizabeth; Christ or damnation.' She seemed convinced of the truth, but destitute of the power to close in with the Saviour. She was not happy in her mind, and said she frequently thought of the instruction she had received, and the prayer I had offered up for her. —Met Mr. Grainger, another old scholar, and talked with him. After tea, went to the prayer meeting in Surrey Chapel, had a good time,— met the teachers in the new school room, about the rules. Returned home at ten.

"*Tuesday*.—Got up at five, much better,— meditated again on the book of Chronicles,

twenty-third chapter. At prayer I had one of the best seasons I ever enjoyed. I think I never had such a view of the divine purity, and the utter impossibility of our praises being received without a change of nature; and even then it must be with great condescension on the part of God. O the value of the blood of the Saviour! I was lost in the view, and my mouth shut. Blessed be God for the books of Chronicles. Visited Miss Fleming. In a good frame of mind,—met one of the parents, he seemed to be overcome with gratitude for my attention to his son, of whom he is not a little proud. Visited the Lodging house in the Mint, —things are going on there as well as can be reasonably expected. Went into the King's Bench Prison, and visited Mrs. M., one of the parents of three of my children. Mrs. M. has been a prisoner twenty-six years,—still find her mind dark as to the way of salvation by Christ. She appears distressed on account of having been persuaded by the minister of the prison to partake of the Lord's Supper. Made several other visits, and in the evening heard Mr. Sherman upon the forgiveness of sin, and the boundless love of God in its forgiveness. I trust I came home profited. Had a visit to-day from Mr. Beal. The conversation with him and my son was spiritual and profitable.

"*Wednesday.*—Arose at five, in good health, —had a good night, my cough not troublesome. Took for my morning draught the first chapter of the first book of Chronicles. The descent from Adam to Noah, a genealogy of about 1086 years. That was a most sinful generation. Alas, how had the gold become dim! Death reigned, through sin, from Adam to Noah. What a nothing is my age and labor compared to my forefathers! Let Enoch, who walked with God, or rather Jesus, be my pattern. These lessons I would learn from this chapter; first, to be humble,—I sprung from Adam; second, to love my neighbor as myself, being of one blood; third, how short are the years of all generations compared with God and eternity; fourth, how wonderfully trodden is the path of death,—what multitudes are gone before me; fifth, how vast will be the assembly in the great day,—not one be missing then. After breakfast went into the city,—kept at home in the afternoon, on account of the rain, —took tea with some of the inmates of Mr. Hill's Imshouses,—we had the presence of God with us, and a most blessed season it was, —closed with prayer. Went to Union street Chapel,—heard a young man, from Matt. v, 'Blessed are they that mourn,' &c. My foot

was in great pain, so that I could scarcely walk home without help, which I had from a good woman whom I knew not, but was known to her,—we had some profitable conversation.

"*Thursday.*—Arose before seven,—found some difficulty in prayer. I seemed to be in a strange frame, owing, I suppose, to my increasing infirmities, but these must not prevail over the new man of the heart. Meditated on the second chapter of Chronicles again, and had new light, verse five. How rare to find four brothers in a family distinguished for wisdom and grace! God seems to take pleasure in exalting the low, and abasing that which is high. At family worship, read the second chapter of the second book of Chronicles. May I prefer the house of God and his church to my own accommodation! Whatever I do for God, is unworthy of his regard. I had a good time in prayer, with strong desires after God, and complete conformity to his image. I desire to put all my affairs into his hands.

"*Friday*—After dinner, visited Miss Abrahams. Had a long and delightful conversation with her mother, upon the subject of living by faith on Christ and his promises. I was then introduced to her daughter, who was lying on her back, in which posture she had continued a

long time, being afflicted with a spinal affection. Her mind appeared calm, and she seemed to enjoy much of the presence of God; drank tea with her, and in the evening returned home, and conducted our weekly prayer-meeting. Our subject was, the love of God. O, what love is this, that I should be regenerated, adopted into his family, and made an heir of himself and all the blessings of the new covenant. O, who can conceive the excellency of their station, or the full glory that is annexed to it! May I have the witness of the Spirit that ere-long I shall be like him,—may this consideration powerfully influence me to the study of holiness of heart and life. We enjoyed a good season.

"*Saturday.*—Arose at seven o'clock, but, owing to the pain in my foot, did not go out the whole of the day. My mind somewhat calm, and had great enjoyment in family prayer. Studied the fifth chapter of the second book of Chronicles. Here we have an account of Reuben, who lost his birthright. How does sin degrade man, and what reason have I to be humble before God for his sparing mercy! One false step often leaves an indelible stain on the memory,—witness Noah, Lot, Judah, David, and others. How pregnant is sin with

evil! how is it attended even with the greatest mischief to our temporal as well as to our eternal intcrest! They who are governed more by sense than by faith, in their choice of their settlement, find often, when it is too late, that they have made a very disadvantageous selection."

These extracts, although only a small portion of what he wrote in his diary, will give the reader a general view of the manner in which his time was every day employed.

As he traveled nearer and nearer to the grave, his real ripening for glory was manifested in his increasing spirituality of mind, his humility, self-abasement and growing estimation of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He appeared conscious himself that he was on the borders of eternity; and there was a power and sweetness in his conversation on the ineffable glories of the beatific vision, and the wonders of redeeming grace, that were peculiarly grateful to the feelings of his Christian friends. To spend an evening with him, was like heaven on earth. A glow of delight seemed to animate his countenance, as he testified his confidence in God, his trust in his promises, his love to the Saviour, his pantings after a conformity to his image, and his bright

anticipations of that day when he should wake in his likeness.

All his thoughts seemed now to centre in heaven, and he could not bear to talk upon any other than serious subjects. He engaged in all his duties with an earnestness and solemnity, that manifested his apprehension that it was the last time he should be so employed. He always entertained the idea, that his departure would be sudden, and was, therefore, careful to carry some cards of address in his pocket, whenever he went from home. Still his mind was not gloomy; on the contrary, he was cheerful and lively, being full of delightful hopes of a blissful immortality.

About six weeks previous to his decease, he attended at the chapel in Collyer's Rents, and heard the Rev. Mr. Hunt. After the service, he retired to the burial-ground, and, standing by the grave where his wife lay, and where he intended to be buried, he poured forth his heart to God in prayer, that the address to be given at his funeral might be made instrumental in the conversion of many souls. So lost was he in devotion on this occasion, that he appeared to be insensible to every thing that was transpiring on earth, until he was interrupted by the sexton, and given to understand that it was time for him to retire.

At the old scholars' meeting in the Mint, which took place a few days previous to his decease, and at which the Rev. J. Sherman presided, Mr. Cranfield was peculiarly solemn and impressive; he told the scholars, that, in all probability, it would be the last time he should meet with them on earth, and charged them before God to meet him at the right hand of the Saviour. At this meeting, several persons publicly declared that the instructions of Mr. C. were made the means of leading them to embrace the truth as it is in Jesus. A respectable looking female, the mother of eight daughters, all of whom had been educated in the school, and most of whom were then present with her, stood up and declared how much she owed to him for the comfort and happiness she enjoyed in seeing her children walking in the truth. This was a scene which angels might have witnessed with delight. Mr. C. returned home with his heart filled with gratitude for having been permitted thus to see the fruits of his labor. "Who am I, O Lord," he said, as he seated himself in his chair, "and what am I, that thou shouldest be pleased thus to honor me? Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

At the meetings for the revival of religion, at Surrey Chapel, in November, 1838, he was a constant attendant, both before and after breakfast. His feelings appeared to be greatly excited, and he was observed to be more frequent than ever at the throne of grace. If his daughter went out on an errand, she generally, when she returned, found him on his knees in prayer; sometimes wrestling with God for a blessing on those meetings, and, at other times, praying that he might not have a name to live, and be, at the same time, like the lifeless and barren fig tree, fit only to be cut down and cast into the fire. When the Rev. Mr. Kirk* announced his intention of preaching to the children of the Southwark Sabbath schools, he spent the whole night in prayer that God would make that sermon instrumental in the conversion of the children. Towards the morning he had about an hour's sleep, and then rose to attend the seven o'clock prayer meeting.

On the Friday preceding his decease, he conducted his own prayer-meeting as usual, and never was he more impressive; his voice was

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*Rev. E. N. KIRK, now pastor of Mount Vernon Church, Boston, Mass.

as full and as strong as ever, and he displayed an intensity of feeling, and spoke with an authority and power, which led many present to believe that his labors were about to terminate. The fervor with which he repeated his following favorite lines will perhaps never be forgotten by them while memory holds her office.

"Away, despair, my gracious Lord doth hear:
Though winds and waves assault my keel,
He doth preserve it; he doth steer,
Even when the boat seems most to reel:
Storms are the triumph of his art;
Well may he close his eyes, but not his heart."

It was, indeed, good to be there. It appeared to be "none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven."

On the following Sabbath, he arose before it was light, and was heard as usual in prayer at a very early hour. When his daughter came into the room she observed, that she was afraid that his getting up so early, while the weather continued cold, would be attended with serious consequences to himself. "I must get up early," he replied; "see"—pointing to a list of his friends, that was at the side of his bed, for whom he was accustomed to pray every morning—" see what a deal of work I have to

do!" This list he was in the habit of renewing occasionally, and it was headed in the following manner:—

"*Thomas Cranfield*,—'*pray for us.*'"

"Lord, in the morning thou shalt hear
My voice ascending high."

"*First*,—*For my Son and Daughters, and their little ones.*"

Then follow the pastors of Surrey and Union street Chapels, with a list of twenty friends. He attended public worship in the morning at Mr. Arundel's, and in the afternoon at the Lodging-house; he then took tea with the teachers at Gravel-lane Sabbath school, where his conversation was peculiarly edifying and instructive. In endeavoring to impress on their minds the importance of prayer, among other things, he said, "The prayer of faith can never be offered in vain. God will always hear prayer,—I will take my oath of it." Mr. Heward having announced that a tea-meeting would be held on the following Sabbath, and invited those present to attend, clapped Mr. C. on the shoulder, and said, "I know my old friend will be there." "No," he replied, "I may be in eternity then."

Early on Monday, Nov. 26th, he was again at the throne of grace, and seemed to enjoy a peculiar flow of spirits. On washing himself, he sang with a strong voice, as was his usual custom,

"O wash my soul from every sin,
And make my guilty conscience clean."

He observed to his daughter, "I have a rare week's work to do. I have a great number of friends to visit, and am going round the neighborhood to canvass for scholars for the Borough road school." After breakfast, having designed to make a few visits on the other side of the water, he folded up a bundle of tracts for distribution on the road; and on putting on his hat, he repeated, as he usually did every morning, when about to leave his home, the well-known lines,--

"Thy work with pleasure, O my God,
Again will I pursue:
And spread the savor of thy name,
Among a careless few."

The first person he called upon was a member of Mr. Arundel's church, in the city, with whom he had a long and delightful conversation.

From thence he went to Hackney, and visited a member of Dr. Cox's church, and also two poor afflicted persons in the neighborhood. To one of them he took a piece of meat, with some herbs, to make her a little broth; and as she could not assist herself, he put it in the saucepan, and placed it on the fire for her. From thence he proceeded to Hoxton, and examined the children of a school there. From this place he went to Smithfield, and visited his youngest daughter. As he stood, with his hat in his hand, ready to take his departure from thence, he said, "I have been living near to God all this day, and I wish, like Enoch, so to walk with him, as that I may just take one step into heaven. Do not be long before you see me, for if you do, you will come home, and find that your poor old father has stepped into his rest." In the same calm and happy frame he returned to his home, and sat up late, conversing on the subject of the atonement. "This is delightful employment," he said, "I could sit up all night, and talk on this subject, but it is our duty to rest our poor bodies."

After retiring to rest, he seemed to sleep soundly, and, to all appearance, was in perfect health; but about four o'clock in the morning,

he awoke with a difficulty of breathing, and knocked for his daughter. On her entering the room, he said, "It is all over, my girl; I am going home at last. The Lord grant me strength and patience." On looking at his countenance, she was greatly alarmed to find it strangely altered, and asked him if she should make a cup of coffee? "Do," he calmly said; "but my work is done, and I am now, blessed be God, going home at last." His difficulty of breathing increasing, he reclined his head upon her shoulder, and soon became insensible. On the arrival of Mr. Newth, his medical attendant, he was bled, and his senses returned for about a quarter of an hour. Mr. Newth asked if he should pray with him, he replied, "Yes, do, by all means," and added a hearty amen to every petition. Anxious to know the state of his mind, his son, who had by this time entered the room, said to him, "It is a great mercy to have an earthly doctor, but the heavenly Physician is he whose presence is most desirable now." "That is it," he replied, "that is it. He is everything." Not knowing who it was that spoke to him, for his eyes remained closed, he said, "Is my son Richard in the room?" and, on being informed that it was he who was talking with him, he

added, "The Lord bless you; the Lord place underneath you his everlasting arms, and support you through your trials. Dying is hard work, my boy"—alluding to his difficulty of breathing. He was then reminded of his favorite lines—

> "I can do all things, or can bear
> All sufferings, if my Lord be there."

A smile instantly brightened up his features, and he replied, "That is a truth; I know it, both in the practice and experience of it." To his daughter and medical attendant he said, "You have done what you can, and I thank you; but," he added, with a significant shake of the head, "it will not do; no, it will not do:" and on their endeavoring to raise his head a little higher, in order to relieve his breathing, he said, with a smile, "Ah, you may prop, but it will not do." Shortly afterwards, he added, with a glow of sacred delight, "A few more sighs, and then———."

These words, though spoken in a strong tone of voice, interrupted only by the accumulation of phlegm, were the last that he uttered; for immediately afterwards, he fell into a kind of sound slumber, in which he continued until the evening of the following day, when, without

the slightest struggle or motion of any kind, he suddenly ceased to breathe, and his spirit winged its way to those mansions of eternal light and glory, "where the sun no more goes down, nor the moon withdraws herself; where the Lord is his everlasting light, and the days of his mourning are ended." A solemn and painful silence ensued, till it was at length broken by his eldest daughter, who, in hurried and stifled accents, seeking relief from her own overpowered feelings, exclaimed, "We have no father now!" But the strong conviction that he was rejoicing amidst the glories of the unseen world, was felt by all, and greatly relieved the anguish of their souls.

In contemplating his peaceful departure, we may exclaim with the poet,—

"How calm his exit.
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn out winds expire so soft.
Behold him in the evening-tide of life,—
A life well spent, whose early care it was
His riper years should not upbraid his green.
By unperceived degrees he wears away,
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at its setting.
High in his faith and hope, look how he reaches
After the prize in view, and, like a bird
That 's hampered, struggles hard to get away.
——————O how he longs
To have his passport signed, and be dismissed.
'Tis done, and now he 's happy."

During the two days that he lay ill, many members of Surrey Chapel, Union street, and other congregations, came to take a final farewell of their dying friend: all were admitted, without distinction, to witness his peaceful end; but as he was unconscious of their presence, they could do no more than gaze upon his happy countenance, and join in prayer for his easy dismission from his earthly tabernacle. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright," involuntarily burst from the lips of almost every visiter; "for the end of that man is peace." Thus died this aged servant of Christ, who, for fifty-five years, was unwearyedly employed in doing good.

> "Burning with love to souls
> Unquenchable, and mindful still of his
> Great change and vast responsibility,"

he appeared to live for no other purpose than to promote the present and eternal happiness of his fellow-men.

The report of his death was soon spread through the neighborhood, and, though it excited but little astonishment, yet, when it was announced, it gave a sudden shock to almost every mind. He had endeared himself to his neighbors and friends by so many acts

of kindness, that they wept for him as for a father; and even those who were enemies to God by wicked works, concurred in paying a just tribute to his memory. From the period of his death till the time of his interment, upwards of six hundred persons came to take a last view of the venerable saint; and of these, it is supposed, that not less than from two to three hundred declared that they had received some benefit from his labors to their souls. The expressions of regret and sorrow that were uttered by these numerous visiters, were truly affecting. One, drawing back her shawl, would show the garment that he had obtained, for her decent appearance at the house of God; and another would tell the tale of distress, from which his benevolence had rescued her.

"I was hungry," said one, "and he fed me. Oftentimes should I have gone without a dinner, if he had not supplied me with rice and sago." "Ah," repeated a second, "I shall never forget him; I invited him to spend an hour at my house, and he turned his visit into a prayer meeting, which has been continued ever since." "I was in prison," said a third, "and he visited me. When confined in the Marshalsea, I wrote that passage on a piece of paper, and sent it to him; and before the messenger could

return, he was at my side. The moment he entered my room, he asked for my Bible; on telling him that I had none with me, he immediately went out and purchased one, and then gave me his spectacles, to assist me in reading it. These spectacles I have now in my possession, and will never part with them while I live. The Bible was given, at his own request, to a prisoner whom I left behind, and is preserved by him with the greatest care." Most persons had something to tell respecting his deeds of mercy, and all united in saying, "I have lost a friend."

On Wednesday, Dec. 5th, 1838, his mortal remains were conveyed to Collyer's Rents burial-ground, followed by a multitude of weeping friends. The teachers of the Mint school, in which he had labored for so many years, claimed the privilege of bearing his pall; and those of the other schools seemed to vie with each other in exhibiting their respect for his memory.

The funeral procession, followed by a vast concourse of spectators, proceeded in the following order:—

Porters.
Two old Female Teachers.
Fifty Girls.
Two Female Teachers.

Two Male Teachers.
Thirty Boys.
Two Male Teachers.
Two Female Teachers.
Forty Girls.
Two Male Teachers.
Two Female Teachers.
Rev. Mr. Sherman and Rev. Mr. Arundel.
Treasurer of the Society—Oldest Superintendent.
An Elder of Surrey Chapel—Medical Attendant.
Two Porters.
Three Stewards
(Of a Benefit Society established by the Deceased.)

Teachers, Pall-Bearers.

THE BODY.

Teachers, Pall-Bearers.

Relations of the Deceased.
Teachers of Surrey Chapel School.
Teachers of Kent street.
Teachers of the Mint.
Teachers of Borough.
Teachers of Borough road.
Teachers of Castle-yard.
Teachers of Dockhead.
Teachers of Jurston street.
Teachers of Bond street.
Teachers of County-terrace.
Teachers of Gravel-lane.
Long Train of Friends.

The body was taken into the meeting-house, which was immediately filled, and hundreds went away unable to gain admission. After an appropriate hymn, the Rev. J. Arundel offered up a very suitable prayer, and the Rev. J. Sherman addressed the friends and spectators from the words, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." The address excited intense inter-

est. It was marked with deep pathos, and faithful and affectionate admonition. After concluding with prayer, the body was removed to the ground, and deposited in the grave till the resurrection. After a few observations from Mr. Heward, made at the request of the deceased, Mr. Cranfield's select class of youth sung an appropriate hymn, and the Rev. Mr. Sherman prayed, and pronounced the benediction. The ground was crowded to excess, and the lamentations of the poor were as the mourning of the Canaanites at the burial of the patriarch Jacob.

On the following Sabbath, several sermons were preached, to improve his death. In the morning, the Rev. J. Arundel delivered a deeply interesting and instructive discourse, to a crowded audience from Isaiah 46: 4; "And even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and deliver you." In the afternoon, at the Mint school, a friend discoursed from Gen. 46: 1; "Behold, I die." The same afternoon, at the Lodging-house, the inmates were addressed by two friends, from Phil. 1: 21, and Ps. 12: 1, 2, 3. In the evening, at Surrey Chapel, the Rev. J. Sherman preached from 2 Cor. 6: 10;

"Poor, yet making many rich." This text was most judiciously selected, and the sermon, which has since been published by Mr. S., was listened to throughout with the most profound attention. During the service, Pope's celebrated ode of "The Dying Christian to his Soul," and Martin Luther's Hymn, were sung, by the immense assembly, with the most thrilling effect. The chapel was crowded at an early hour, and vast numbers, many of whom came from a considerable distance, were disappointed at not being able to gain admission.

The same evening, an agent of the Surrey Chapel Christian Instruction Society, preached from Phil. 1: 21, at the Mint school, the pulpit of which was hung with black cloth.

Such were the respect and sympathy manifested upon the removal of this devoted man to his last earthly home. "The memory of the just is blessed," says the wise man; and never was the truth of this Scripture more clearly and interestingly illustrated than at the funeral of Thomas Cranfield. May those devoted men who have entered into his labors, imitate his zeal, and, like him, adopt the maxim of the apostle—"Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

CHAPTER X.

THE PERSON AND CHARACTER OF MR. CRANFIELD.

Having sketched the principal incidents connected with the life and death of Mr. Cranfield, it would, perhaps, be desirable to give a more detailed description of such features in his character as have only been slightly portrayed in the foregoing chapter.

In his person he was, in his younger days tall and commanding, though, towards the end of his life, his stature was somewhat diminished, by reason of "the strong men bowing themselves," as well as of a slight bend in his figure. He was stout and strongly built, though by no means corpulent; and his countenance, even in his old age, was open, florid, full of benignity, and altogether prepossessing. Several persons have declared to his family, that they loved him the first time they saw him, because he looked so amiable and happy. This respect and attachment were always increased upon further acquaintance, as he was affable, obliging, complacent, and seldom conversed without some good object in view.

He was a man of extraordinary courage and intrepidity. He appeared to be void of fear, and often entered into places where few would like to follow him. One day, being in the Mint canvassing for scholars, he found a family living on the wages of iniquity, furnished by two daughters, one nine, and the other eleven, years of age. He invited them to come to the school, to which they seemed inclined, but the mother positively refused her permission. Mr. C., stung with indignation at the conduct of the woman, cried out, "What! are not your children going to hell fast enough, that you must drive them there?" and though there were two stout men in the room, he lifted up his hand to the woman, and said, "Woe be to you, madam, if you do not let your children go to the Sabbath school." Such was his energy, and such his indignant look, that the men stood mute with astonishment; the woman trembled, and, to the surprise of even Mr. C. himself, the children were afterwards sent to the school.

Wherever he had to travel, he always took the shortest road however lonely or dangerous, and the fears of his family were thereby constantly excited on his behalf. About the year 1793, when proceeding through a dark narrow

lane, near Holywell Mount, he was met by a highwayman, who presented a pistol at his head; but Mr. C., previously guessing his intention, had prepared himself for the attack, and going boldly up to the man, hastily seized his arm, before he could fire upon him, he, by a single stroke, leveled him to the ground, and scattered the pistols to a distance. Seeing his antagonist fall, and judging that no benefit could arise from any further contest, he passed from him at full speed, and then challenged him to overtake him if he could. At another time, returning from Barking, with a considerable sum of money in his possession, he discovered two men with pistols secreting themselves in a hedge. He immediately commended himself into the hands of God, and these words came into his mind—"He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee." He then went fearlessly towards the hiding-place, crying out, "Come on, Tom! come on, Bob!" as though he had several companions with him; but before he could get to the spot, he saw the robbers making their escape.

In his younger days, he was a man of extraordinary strength; his muscular powers were so great, that, upon an emergency, he has sup-

ported a weight which six ordinary men could not, without great difficulty, sustain; and yet so far from priding himself upon his astonishing powers of body, he never was known to make it a subject of conversation, either at home or abroad.

Notwithstanding his strength, Mr. C. was accustomed *to endure injuries with great patience and forbearance.* Once, when a man was wrongfully insulting him, and drawing his character in most odious colors, he calmly said to him, "Well, I am exceedingly obliged to you for the very good opinion you have of me; but if you try your utmost you cannot paint my character so black as it is." At another time, a thief having entered his house, and stole some trifling articles, he, not knowing what it was that the thief had taken, pursued and overtook him. As the magistrates were then sitting at Union-hall, he took him straight to the office, and the offender was about to be committed for trial, when Mr. C. relented, and begged for some mild punishment. He was then remanded for a short time, and Mr. C. visited him in gaol, supplied him with some food, and, on the third day of his confinement, procured his discharge, and gave him half-a-crown.

Humility was a distinguishing feature in the character of Mr. Cranfield. "Humility," says an elegant writer, "is the sweetest and fairest flower that grows in the breast, and perfumes the owner with the most attractive sweets." How delightfully were its beauties displayed in him, and how extensively were its influences felt and acknowledged. Hence arose that love and respect which was so universally entertained for him. It has been often remarked by his friends, that scarcely any person could be an hour in his company without loving him; yet no one could be more loud in the condemnation of himself, or speak in stronger terms of the pride of his own heart. The acute sense he had of the evil of sin greatly cherished this feeling of humility: for in proportion to the views we have of the majesty and holiness of God, of our dependence upon him, and our obligations to him, as creatures, our conduct and disposition towards him as sinners, combined with a sense of his pardoning love, and our acceptance in the beloved, will be the measure of our humility. In Mr. Cranfield these views were strong and habitual, and that humble, contrite frame of spirit, in which the Lord delights, seemed almost as natural to him as his breathing. It is easy to say, "I am

a poor unworthy creature;" but the man who really feels himself to be such, will prove that he is humble before God by submission to his will, and by a meek and unassuming deportment towards his fellow-creatures. This was eminently the case in the conduct of Mr. C. He had a deep and thorough conviction of sin, of his own unworthiness before God, and of his obligation to the Saviour; so that in his supplications at the throne of grace, though he always used strong language, he was ever at a loss for words to express his own ideas of the deformity of sin, and the excellencies of Christ.

Another amiable trait in the character of Mr. Cranfield, was *his lively feeling of gratitude for mercies received.* This spirit is always associated with true humility; and, in proportion to the Christian's sense of his own unworthiness, is his thankfulness for those supplies which he feels he has forfeited by his rebellion. He was accustomed to view every blessing, both spiritual and temporal, as coming to him immediately from the hands of God, through the mediation of the Son of his love. With the exception of the pardon of his sins through the sacrifice of Christ, there was nothing for which he appeared so grateful as the preservation of his life during the siege of Gibraltar, while he was yet in his

sins, and exposed to everlasting ruin. After the Lord had opened his eyes, under the ministry of Mr. Romaine, and he had seen the awful gulf, upon the very brink of which he had been sporting, and from which he had been so providentially delivered, he was utterly at a loss for words with which to convey the feelings of his thankful heart; and his gratitude, instead of being diminished by the lapse of time, seemed rather to increase with every year of his protracted existence. From the period of his conversion, to the end of his life, he invariably kept the anniversary of the bombardment as a day of solemn fasting and prayer.

But, in expressing his gratitude for mercies received, he did not forget the instruments by which they were conveyed to him. It was the remark of several of his friends, that they never knew a person more grateful for acts of kindness than he was. The following is an extract from a letter to a friend, from whom he had received repeated favors:

Dec. 13, 1837.

"DEAR SIR:—I am constrained, from a sense of manifest unkindness, and want of respect, to present to you a few lines, by way of acknowledging my fault. I might plead excuses, such

as engagements in visiting the poor, and the infirmity of age; but they will not do. I have sinned, in that I have not paid that respect due to you, and your God, through your hands; but especially for that Christian affection and respect which has abounded towards me and mine. No doubt, you have had hard thoughts of me. I pray the Lord to remove them. Time has taught me that old friends are better than new; and grace has improved this experience, for friends in Christ will be so for ever. We may part for a time, but only to meet again. I can say, my conscience bearing me witness, that you have not been off my mind one day. Nay, it cannot be otherwise; for I have a written list of my friends, for whom I pray every morning, and you are nearly at the top. How many times have I resolved to come and see you, but something or other has always stepped in to prevent it.

"Time has shaken me by the hand, and death is behind me. I trust I have taken the warning, and have fled to Jesus for refuge; and I find by experience, that he is faithful in what he has engaged to perform: namely, that when heart and flesh shall fail, God will be the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. I bless his name for the abundant provision he

has made.—'Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust even from my youth.' I am a wonder to many, but thou art my strong refuge; my mouth would be filled with his praise all the day long, for he will not cast me off in the time of old age. O, no, no! he will not forsake me when my strength faileth. His compassion binds him to comfort and relieve his old servant.—Thus far I have written of myself, that you may know what latitude I am in."

Christian charity eminently adorned the mind of Mr. Cranfield. The fruits of righteousness are not solitary; they always grow in a cluster, though in different persons the effect of one may be more conspicuous than those of others. The apostle intimates, that it is possible a man may possess the tongue of an angel, the wisdom and faith of a prophet, and the zeal and benevolence of a martyr; and for want of that love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things," he may, in the sight of God, be no better than as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. But the flame which burned in the heart of Mr. Cranfield was conspicuous to all around,—was evidently enkindled by the Holy Spirit, and produced a cordial love and good-

will toward his fellow-creatures, of whatever grade or country, sect or party they were.

Though the lot of Mr. C. was cast principally among the Dissenters, yet he was no sectarian. When asked whether he was a Churchmen or a Dissenter, he would sometimes say, "I scarcely know. When I see the Dissenters diligent and active in the cause of Christ, burning with zeal for the honor and glory of his name, then I am inclined to be a Nonconformist; but when I see the Episcopalians coming behind them, tripping up their heels, and taking the lead in the glorious work, then I say, The Church for ever!" He was well acquainted with the nature and history of dissent, having in his younger days read many of the old authors, and works of a controversial nature; but in his latter days he read few books besides his Bible, and never troubled his head about parties and systems. As an exception, however, to this general remark, it must be noticed, that he was much opposed to the doctrine of the high, or rather hyper-Calvinists. "Don't talk to me about preaching only to the elect," he would sometimes say, "till you can chalk them on the back." At other times he would remark, "To talk of converting sinners by preaching only to saints, is an absurdity.

Such persons are wiser than the apostle Peter, for he preached to one in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity."

Benevolence, however, appeared to be the master passion of Mr. Cranfield's mind. He studied the pattern, followed the steps, and drank largely into the spirit of his Lord and Master. He had not the gift of miracles, but he had a tender fellow-feeling for the poor and afflicted, and he denied himself many lawful gratifications for their sakes. He could cheerfully submit to any service, and thought nothing too low, or too mean, in which to engage, if, thereby, he could benefit either the souls or the bodies of men.

Through every period of his Christian life, he acted out the generous sentiment of the Roman: "I am a man, and there is nothing relating to mankind in which I do not feel interested." He participated in the joys of his neighbors, and shared their sorrows. He rejoiced with those that rejoiced, and wept with those that wept. By the poor he was considered a father. They were accustomed to consult him in all their difficulties, for time or eternity. Did the widow or orphan require some one to assist them in settling their earthly affairs;—they came to him, and his time was

ever at their disposal, without fee or reward. In settling the affairs of one widow, it is calculated that he walked no less than 150 miles; and it was very seldom, indeed, that he was without some such business in hand. Many who were involved in pecuniary difficulties, sent for him, to intercede with their creditors on their behalf; and in this he was invariably successful. Were any in want of clothing to protect them from the inclemency of the weather;—they came to him. It was only on the last day of his active life, that a poor woman, whom he did not know, came to him, and asked for a flannel garment; and had he been in health another day, no doubt her request would have been granted. On these occasions he always spoke to them concerning their spiritual interests, and interrogated them respecting their attendance on the means of grace. When in better circumstances, he would frequently board and lodge a whole family until employment could be obtained, or relief otherwise afforded. Many are the persons, now living in respectability, whom he has been the means of raising from obscurity and want; and in his latter days, though crippled in his means, he was still the friend of the Lord's poor; and when circumstances, in his opinion, have required it, he has cheerfully

parted with the dinner from his table, the clothes from his person, and the blankets from his bed.

It will be naturally supposed, that living as he did, in the midst of a poor and crowded neighborhood, the calls on his benevolence were many and urgent; but there were so many friends who felt proud to assist him in this charitable employ, that he only had to make a statement of the case, in order to obtain the means of relieving it. The following extract from a letter to a friend, exciting him to acts of benevolence, will show his attention to the afflicted poor:—

"Mint street, 8th June, 1831.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been called to visit a person in great distress, residing at No. 19, Little Suffolk street. The man to all apppearance is in a dying state. I inquired respecting his hopes for eternity; and after relating to me his experience, I found that he was building on the covenant of works. This prop, upon which he was leaning, was quickly removed, and he began to tremble, finding he had no support. I have given him Bunyan's 'Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ,' and other suitable tracts, which have, I trust, been made a blessing to him.

"I have constantly visited him since, and I am happy to say, that, as far as I can judge, both he and his wife are convinced of their awful state, and are seeking for salvation in Christ. But I have another thing to tell you: these poor creatures are in a starving condition. Last Sabbath, I saw that they had but a half-penny cabbage between them for dinner. I sent them a piece of meat from my table; and frequently they have had nothing to eat till they received it from my house. The landlord now threatens to seize what few goods they have for rent. The poor man has been recommended to the Surrey Chapel Benevolent Society, but the little he received from that source, is not sufficient to sustain life. I therefore apply to you for assistance, being anxious to save the bed, which appears to be the only comfort of an earthly nature they have. I feel persuaded, that whatever God disposes your mind to give, will be thankfully received. It would be an insult to say any thing further: I cannot suppose that the soul of a Christian can be drawn out in prayer for the salvation of another, without feeling, at the same time, an interest in his temporal welfare."

In these works of mercy, Mr. C. was unwearied and the sums of money he obtained

for the use of distressed objects, and his devotedness to their interests, were astonishing. Many who knew nothing of his private affairs, were led to suppose that he was a man of affluence, as his supplies appeared to be inexhaustible; while, at the same time, he was, perhaps as straitened in his circumstances as many on whose behalf his benevolence was exercised, not thinking himself at liberty to convert to his own use, that which had been entrusted to him for the use of others.*

Many have objected to him, that his zeal for the welfare of others carried him beyond the bounds of prudence, and prevented him from being sufficiently provident for his family. To a person who was speaking to him one day respecting his giving away that which he stood in need of himself, he said, "Well now, come, let us reason together. This morning I visited a poor woman who was lying-in; in one corner of the room lay the poor creature on a morsel of straw, with the new-born babe on one side of her, and on the other was a child in the agonies of death. I looked in the cupboard, and there

* In 1836, Mr. C.'s income became so reduced, that the Rev. J. Arundel recommended him to the "Aged Pilgrims' Society," from whom he received a small weekly allowance until his death.

was not a morsel of food, neither was there any fire in the grate, and the husband out of employment. Now, what would you do in such a case? The man who has but a sixpence to call his own, and has a heart to withhold it, under such circumstances, must be a monster. My Bible tells me that "whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Before any person, therefore, can form a correct opinion of his conduct in this respect, he must possess something of his philanthropic disposition, and know more of the wretchedness which he sometimes witnessed in the squalid abodes of those to whom he often appeared as an angel of mercy. It was the delight of his heart to relieve the wants of others. "O, what a mercy it is, "he would sometimes say, "that I am able to assist my fellow-creatures;" and this employment he considered as much his privilege as his duty.

But though his regard for the poor, in general, was great, it did not equal his solicitude for the welfare of those who were his brethren in Christ. The Lord's poor he considered had especial claims upon his sympathies and prayers; for them he would beg almost from door

to door, and in such a way that few could resist the force of his appeal. "Consider," he would sometimes say (as the purse was drawn from the pocket, or some article of consumption was being tied up), "for whom you are doing it: it is for one of God's children, and that is no mean person." The Rev. R. Hill, towards the close of his life, was in the habit of placing a certain amount of silver in his purse every morning, for the purpose of casual distribution, and Mr. C. would frequently come in and lay before him a case of distress in such a manner as would have the effect of quickly emptying it of the whole of its contents; and after his departure, Mr. H. would sometimes observe, "When that compound of all that is good and excellent comes here, he makes me ashamed of myself, and I can really deny him nothing."

As a Christian, Mr. Cranfield generally appeared cheerful and happy, and was frequently as playful as a child. The children of his charge loved him as a father; and on his road to the school, he was usually met by a little company of them, for the purpose of escorting him to the place of instruction. One would seize his hand, another his coat, and the whole would gather around him so closely, that it was with difficulty he could proceed; whilst the

neighbors would stand at their doors and say, "God bless that dear old man!"

At times, however, Mr. C. experienced considerable mental depression: but these seasons were generally of short duration, as on their approach he would either seek refuge in his Bible, or at the throne of grace; or he would sit down to write, for his own improvement. The latter method he very frequently practised and generally succeeded in writing himself into a good frame. The following is an interesting specimen of this species of writing which he addressed to his daughters:—

"Good Friday, 1832.

"Dear Children,—I have been this day to partake of the elements commemorative of my dying Lord; but, alas, my mind appeared overspread with a cloud, so that I could not see the Sun of righteousness; consequently, my views of Christ crucified were not cheering, but dull. I was in a stupor, having no active apprehension of the Saviour. I find I am at a distance from him, as though I were not of the family, a stranger at home, a lifeless frame, every trifle a trouble; nothing pleasant, no love for the word, no appetite to read and meditate. I take up one book and then another,

and lay them down, without any impression of a spiritual nature on my mind. I want (and nothing can satisfy me but that) a sense of the pardoning love of God. I am as a ship without compass or pilot, uncertain as to my steering; fearful I shall upset on some rock, and make shipwreck of faith. Thus I have been poring in the dark, to seek for light. It is true my nature is sin and ignorance; I must not expect any consolation from within. O, to look through the cloud by faith, and see Jesus seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, pleading for me! God is humbling me, and giving me to see my poverty, that I may live more by faith. I have known what it is to believe in the dark, and have experienced the blessed effects of it so that I have actually possessed the blessings contained in the promises of God, and enjoyed them, as seeing them afar off. This one thing I do know, that there is no enjoyment but what springs from a sense of the pardoning love of God applied by the Holy Spirit. This then, is my encouragement; although I cannot go to Christ as a child to his father, I can go as a poor sinner, saying, 'God be merciful unto me!' I have been inquiring why my soul is so cast down, and what I am to do in this lifeless frame. My Bible says, 'hope thou in God'—in faithful-

ness. He is not a man that he should lie: He hath said, and he will do it. My dear girls, there is a dawn of light this moment sprung up in my heart from his precious word: 'who is there among you that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God.' And again, 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them.' O, here is comfort! here are fresh supplies of living water! let me lay down my pen, and look at these sweet portions. I begin at the 40th of Isaiah and read on through the 41st and 42d chapters. Why I have been like Hagar in the wilderness—near the well, without being able to see it. Thus, you see, I am getting a little into the light, although it is now ten o'clock at night. The flesh says, 'Thomas, to bed;' but the Spirit says, 'Go on.' Which of the two am I to obey? My head says, 'the flesh.' Well, then, I will go and take some of those sweet portions, and plead them before the Lord. Farewell! Good-night.

"*Saturday.*—I have slept well, and find myself much better. Took a walk, and looked in at the school; came home somewhat weary —read an interesting tract about a sailor, and

here I am, waiting for a bright day. It is good that a man doth wait and hope in the Lord. I had this afternoon a sweet view of the barrel of meal; it did not waste by using; there was a constant supply. So it is with Christ; although he has enriched millions, he is not in the least impoverished. No, 'he giveth more grace. Well, then, 'why, being the King's son, so lean from day to day?' The reason is obvious: 'Ye will not come unto me,' says Christ, 'that ye may have life.' I have been a little way with our Lord through the vineyard, John xv. O, when the blessed husbandman takes up his knife, it sometimes cuts keenly, and makes us feel and cry out. This I know is not joyous but grievous, yet it doth yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness; and the result is, he bringeth more fruit unto God.

"*Sabbath.*—Awoke at half-past twelve.—A great fire in Kent street.—I feel thankful that I am preserved. Arose early, and feel myself well, but weak. I feel the necessity of abiding in Christ by repeated acts of faith. I do find that when I depart from Christ, though it be but partially, or when I neglect my duty, I get into a poor, withered, fruitless condition. Pray, pray, pray for

"Your most affectionate father,

"THOS. CRANFIELD."

Although Mr. Cranfield appeared generally in a truly spiritual frame of mind, yet it is certain, that *he had great and frequent conflicts* with the prince of darkness. He appeared, during the whole of life, to be an especial mark at which that enemy of souls shot his fiery darts. No doubt, the natural disposition of Mr. C. (being a man of remarkable strong feelings) invited his foe to the attack. What the precise nature of those conflicts was, is not exactly certain, as he generally appeared to manifest an aversion to talk on the subject; but it is evident they were very severe. He has sometimes declared to his family, that he had experienced struggles quite as desperate as that described in the "Pilgrim's Progress," between Christian and Apollyon, insomuch that the perspiration has started from every pore. The following passage in the life of John Bunyan, he has marked with his own hand, and has written in the margin, "This is my experience."

"But in this work, as in all other, I had my temptations attending me, and that of divers kinds; as sometimes when I have been violently assaulted with thoughts of blasphemy, and strongly tempted to speak the words with my mouth before the congregation.

"I have also, while found in this blessed work of Christ, been often tempted to pride and liftings up of heart; and though I dare not say I have not been affected with this, yet truly, the Lord, of his precious mercy, hath so carried it towards me, that I have had small joy to give way to such a thing."

But these struggles, though violent, were short; being well armed with the sword of the Spirit, and having a wonderful address in the use of it, he came off more than conqueror, through the strength and assistance of the Captain of his salvation. These conflicts, however, were not unattended with blessings—as they led him to watch and to pray—to abide more beneath the shadow of the Almighty, and to depend more upon him for strength to help in time of need.

It might be said of Mr. Cranfield, as it was of Apollos, that *he was mighty in the Scriptures.* There was no part of the word of God with which he did not appear to be thoroughly acquainted; and although, in the latter part of his life, his memory commonly failed him upon other subjects, yet, when asked to prove any doctrine of the gospel, he could repeat texts one after another, giving chapter and verse for each, almost as correctly as if he

quoted them from a concordance. In social parties he was often very amusing, in the manner, and readiness, with which he detected the mistakes of some garrulous friend. A gentleman, one evening, having discoursed very long and learnedly upon the sinfulness of calling our fellow-creatures hypocrites, concluded by saying, that there was no instance in the whole word of God of any righteous person calling a man a hypocrite, save him who searcheth the heart. To which Mr. C. replied with a good-humored smile, and without a moment's hesitation, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." At another time, being told that there was neither precept nor command in the Bible for giving thanks *after* meat, he immediately quoted Deut. 8: 10, "When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God, and the good land which he hath given thee." The holy Scriptures, indeed, were his continual study. Few persons entered the room without finding the Bible before him; and if in the night he could get no sleep, he would frequently light a candle, and read and pray for hours together. In the day-time he seldom read without pen, ink, and paper, by his side, for the purpose of noting down any thing that

might strike his attention. The sayings of Christ, as recorded in the four Gospels, were always remarkably precious to his soul. He used to say, that there was a power and fulness in them, such as he could find no where else. At one time, when confined to his home by indisposition, he marked in his Bible, with a pen, under every word uttered by our Saviour; and at another, he copied them out with his own hand. He was accustomed to read his Bible quite through, and always with some particular design—sometimes to discover for himself, when, and under what circumstances, the promise of the Messiah was given; at another time, to find if God revealed himself to his people in any other than a relative character; and in the year that closed his life, he studied it with a view to direct all its promises and threatenings, personally to himself. This he found to be a truly profitable employment, and his mind became enriched thereby. The following is a letter he wrote to his daughter while engaged in this work:—

"8th October, 1838.

"My Dear Martha,—'Here we suffer grief and pain.'—I am going through the fire, but am wonderfully supported. Things in the

family are as they should be, in reference to God's dealings in afflictive dispensations. Afflictions flow from the heart of God, therefore they are not to be despised. They are proofs of our sonship, so they are profitable; they promote fellowship and communion with God. They are profitable, when we look not at the things that are seen. When faith is in exercise, she looks beyond the cloud Faith has to do with unseen things. Alas! what is the world with all its enjoyments? Dog's-meat—in comparison with fellowship with God. O, ye sons of wealth and ease, I envy you not; I possess all; my estate is vast, beyond limits; I have more than Adam lost; I have Christ, with all the perfection of Deity, made over to me in a covenant sealed by the blood of Christ, witnessed by the Holy Spirit to my soul. See the Judge's hand-writing—'Your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more.' I have also the hand of my God, in writing—'That he will carry me through old age;' therefore I fear not. O yes, my dear child, I have a lodging between the shoulders of Christ—here I am safe. I have laid all my concerns, with my children and their little ones, upon the same shoulders. Now, hear what my covenant God, my family Jehovah, says, 'Heark-

en unto me,' (Dear Lord! close my ears to all without and within,) 'hearken unto me, O house of Thomas Cranfield, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will hear; even I will carry and deliver you.'

"Here is a cordial for an old man; and here I am, a witness for God, that he is faithful to his engagement. May the Lord bless you; and when it is well with you, remember—

"Your affectionate father,

"THOS. CRANFIELD."

"P. S.—O, dear! my head is bad; I am ashamed of this note. Well, it may be my last. I feel the old man; I would shake him off, but I cannot; and my Father knows that my strength is to sit still. Faith says it is best for me: then as I need it, I must go out of myself for support."

Thus much must suffice for the description of his personal character. His character as a teacher of the young, and visiter of the afflicted, will be given in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHARACTER OF MR. CRANFIELD, AS A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER AND VISITER OF THE AFFLICTED.

Whatever view we take of the character of Mr. Cranfield, we find in it something interesting and striking; but as a Sabbath school teacher, and visiter of the poor and afflicted, no man, perhaps, was more extensively useful, and signally successful. There is no doubt that he was raised up of God for the important station he was called to occupy, and that he was eminently qualified by the Holy Spirit for the times in which he appeared.

As a teacher, he was, undoubtedly, one of the most eminent, indefatigable, zealous and useful of any that have appeared since the formation of Sabbath schools, by the immortal Raikes.

In all his engagements at the school, punctuality was strictly observed by him; this he considered an indispensable qualification for a teacher. Nothing appeared to ruffle him more than to see the teachers come in half an hour after the time for opening the school. Such

persons he would sometimes accost on their entrance, as perfect strangers, and very gravely ask them if they were teachers, or what was their business there? During the whole period of his labors, he was never known to absent himself from the school on account of the weather; nothing but indisposition was considered by him a sufficient excuse for such neglect of duty.

In the class, he was kind, serious and interesting; and in the desk, solemn, persuasive and energetic. Indeed, in his addresses to the children, the energy of his spirit and of his utterance was such as is seldom exceeded in Sabbath schools. He would give such scope to his feelings, as often to be so overcome, that it was with difficulty he could proceed. Frequently, both teachers and children were excited to tears, by his pathetic representations of the love of the Saviour, and his readiness to receive sinners. He spoke with authority as a messenger from God, and his language, though not always in perfect accordance with the rules laid down by scholars, was nevertheless, in strict accordance with the inspired rule of life. The sense he had of the evil of sin, the worth of souls, and the nearness of eternity, filled his soul with holy

ardor, and raised him far above that cold critical nicety of expression, which, while it pleases the ear, leaves the heart unsubdued.

The methods he sometimes used, for the purpose of fixing the attention of the children, and impressing their minds, were striking, and often productive of the most happy results. One day, after energetically urging his youthful hearers to flee from the wrath to come, he exclaimed, "Children, do you know whither you are going? Did you ever in your life, for a moment, think whether you are going to heaven or hell? If not, think of it now. Do not delay; time is precious, and the next moment may hurry you into an eternal world. O, do examine yourselves; let each one ask himself and herself, am I going to heaven or hell?" and then taking out his watch, he laid it on the desk, and said, "Come, I will give you three minutes to think of the matter." The children, during this time, remained in the most profound silence; and there is no doubt, that many seriously considered the question. At other times, he would quote passages of Scripture, and direct them personally to the children by name, in this manner:— "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth! and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy

youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, Thomas Jones,—know thou, Mary Smith,—know thou, William Farrell (pointing to each), that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment." The children, by these means, were often much affected, and even the teachers have declared, that so powerful has been the impression made upon their minds, that the remembrance of many of his expressions would be carried with them to the grave.

The success of Mr Cranfield's labors was extraordinary. Several instances of usefulness have already been recorded; besides these, there are many others of an extremely interesting character, the details of which have, from time to time, been transmitted to the Committee of the Southwark Society, by whom they are preserved in a book, kept for that purpose, with many other documents of a similar kind which have been furnished by the various schools connected with that institution. Indeed, he was continually being called to visit the happy death-beds of some of his scholars, and seldom, or never, did an old scholars' meeting break up, without some declaring that his instructions were made

instrumental in their conversion. In the latter part of his life, it be may said, without exaggeration, that scarcely a week elapsed without his being met in his walks by one or more of his old scholars, who thanked him for his attention, and told him, that the Lord had met with them in the way of mercy through his instrumentality.

The great secret of his success appears to have been his love of prayer, his faith in the promises of God, and his entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit, in all his efforts. Like Elisha, when he raised to life the son of the Shunamite, he commenced the work with secret prayer, and then, while careful to contract himself, as it were, within the narrow limits of the children's understanding, he stretched his powers to the utmost, as an instrument, to warm their hearts with a Saviour's love, and to raise them from a death of sin to a life of righteousness. He knew, indeed, that it was not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God, that sinners were to be converted; that doctrine was ever prominent in all his discourses; but he was also aware that God worked by means, and that an *icicle* was a most unlikely instrument to enkindle a *flame*.

In all his instructions to the children, he had an eye to the parents, and seldom finished his addresses without repeating some short sentiment or striking anecdote, which the scholars were requested to carry home.

Nor was he active in the cause, only when at school. Much of his time was also occupied at home, in composing catechisms upon various subjects, both for the instruction of the children and the use of the teachers. These catechisms alone are so numerous, and some of them of such extreme length, as to induce the supposition, that the whole of his leisure time must have been employed In that exercise.

It was the plan of Mr. Cranfield, if it could be avoided, never to lose sight of the children that had been instructed in the school. He followed them as far as he was able, to the stations they occupied in the world, inquiring into their conduct, and exhorting them to continue in the things they had learned. He was constantly writing to some of them to know the state of their minds, and to ascertain if they were still traveling to Zion with their faces thitherward. Many letters, of an interesting character, still remain, that he received from the old scholars, in answer to his inquiries.

In writing to the old scholars, his language

was calculated to affect their hearts; and they who refused to believe, were often compelled to tremble. To the old scholars whom he knew to be living in sin, he was generally very severe. He well knew the gall and bitterness of a state of bondage to the powers of darkness, for it had been his own; and he hated sin so universally in all its forms, that his declarations against it were both pointed and searching.

These letters were sure to be followed by a visit, when another reproof would be received from him in person. The fear of the Lord had raised him above the fear of man; and he thought it his duty to be equally zealous and bold in expostulating with his guilty scholars, wherever he met them.

He was always careful that none of the children should go out into the world without a Bible. If they had none of their own, they were furnished with one, either out of the teachers' fund, or at his own expense, and generally with some remarks in his own handwriting, on the cover or fly-leaf. The following lines were written in a Bible presented to a little girl:—

"This book of books is presented to you from a friendly regard for your spiritual wel-

fare. It is one of the most eminent means of converting the soul. This book is well adapted, by the Spirit of God, to teach man solid wisdom in things pertaining to himself and godliness. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' My dear young friend, let me exhort you to seek a saving knowledge of God in Christ forthwith; for, compared with this, all other knowledge is vain and useless. Next to this, I would that you honor your mother, gladly receive her instruction, and earnestly practise it, in order to promote the fear of God in your mind. See that, with utmost circumspection and eagerness, you avoid all unnecessary fellowship with the wicked. Oh, do not listen to their flattering inducements; for, if they once entangle you, they will perpetually hurry you on from one horrid course to another. How necessary, then, that you should make this book the man of your counsel. It is with earnest prayer, I present it to you.

"THOS. CRANFIELD.

"*4th July*, 1826."

In visiting and comforting the sick and afflicted, Mr. Cranfield was as active and successful as in his endeavors to feed the lambs of Christ's flock. The number of per

sons whose spiritual eyes he has been the means of opening, through these seasonable visits, is surprising; and yet our wonder ceases when we consider the means he employed for the purpose. His first care was to see if they were in possession of a Bible; and if they could not read, he would either go every day, or perhaps twice or thrice a day, himself, or send some other person, to read to them. He then presented their case before the throne of the Divine Majesty, and would spend hours in prayer on their behalf. His visits were always continued till either the affliction was in some measure removed, or the sufferer died.

Perhaps few persons were better adapted for visiting the poor and afflicted than Mr. Cranfield. Having passed through almost every variety of suffering himself, he could enter into the feelings of others, and, like an experienced physician, knew exactly what remedies to administer, and where to apply them. But to no class of persons was he more eminently useful, than to those who, having been convinced of sin, were led by Satan to believe that their crimes were of too great a magnitude to be pardoned. To such persons he would open such a catalogue of offences that he himself had committed, and from which

the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed him, that every mouth became stopped, and multitudes who had been saying, "He will be favorable no more, his mercy is clean gone for ever," have, from the detail of his experience, been encouraged to hope in the Lord, and have eventually experienced the truth of the Psalmist's declaration, "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." At the sick chambers, therefore, of poor unfortunate females, he was generally a physician of value; and as his age and character placed him above suspicion, he scrupled not to go into these very worst abodes of infamy, disease and wretchedness. It will not be known till the morning of the resurrection, what benefits have resulted from his labors among this class of persons; one instance only must here suffice.

About the year 1815, he was sent for, in great haste, to visit an unhappy female who had attempted to commit suicide, and whose life was despaired of. In the messenger, who came with the hasty summons, he recognized an old scholar of the Mint school, but her appearance was so much altered, that it was with difficulty he remembered her features. The dew of health had departed from her

cheeks; her eyes had ceased to sparkle with their former lustre, and her general appearance but too plainly indicated the class of characters with which she was associated. He went with her to the house of mourning, and was assiduous in his attention both to her and her companion. The one was raised again from what was thought to be her dying bed, but returned to her former vicious course. The other, however, exhibited tokens of true penitence and deep contrition, and was reclaimed from the paths of infamy and sorrow, and, by the blessing of God on the endeavors of her teacher and friend, she "was delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son." Mr. C. raised a small weekly subscription for her, and procured her a little needle-work, by which she was enabled to live in comfort the rest of her days. But the seeds of a fatal disorder, which it was impossible for medical skill to eradicate, had been produced in her delicate frame, in consequence of her former irregularities and exposure to the night air. Her health gradually wasted away, and, after two years of the most consistent walk and conversation, she was released from pain and suffering, and, no doubt, was admitted into that heavenly Jerusa-

lem, "where the inhabitants shall no more say they are sick, and the people that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquities." Mr. C. watched over her, till her death, with parental affection; and the expressions of gratitude which fell from her lips were truly delightful and encouraging. "The blessing of one that was ready to perish came upon him," and if he had lived for no other purpose than to be instrumental in plucking this brand from the burning, his would have been a useful life.

But believers in Christ were the objects of his peculiar regard. For them he spent much time, both at the throne of grace and at the writing-table. His letters to mourners in Zion would fill a large and interesting volume.

The following letter to his son, at the Margate Infirmary, affords an admirable specimen of his ability in comforting those that mourn:—

"My very dear Richard,—I received your kind letter, and thank you for your remembrance of me. My soul yearns over you, and am saying inwardly, 'By what shall I comfort you.' Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. Your state is ordered by a wise counsel; for, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my

pleasure.' The counsels of the Lord are deep; the result of unerring wisdom. The matter, means and end are all therein connected. O, that God should consult our welfare! He is 'wise in all his ways, and holy in all his works.' God promises to own them in captivity; so he does. All his, in whatever condition they may be, he promises to support them, and deliver them. You have a skilful pilot at the helm. 'Be still, and know that I am God.' You know that Jeremiah, who is an old friend of mine, says, 'If thou hast run with the footmen and they weary thee, how shalt thou contend with horsemen?' Remember, God's thoughts are thoughts of peace, to give you an expected end. I know your state is rather galling; but I see there is much mixture of mercy. It affords me great pleasure to hear that you are so usefully employed in distributing tracts. Who knows but that the Lord has sent you to Margate, to be the means of the salvation of some poor sinner? This will make up for all your pain and sorrow.

"The best remedy I can find for trials is patience; so let patience have her perfect work. Cheerfully submit to the hands of God, and say, 'The cup which my heavenly Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?' Look at Micah 7: 9, 'I will bear the indignation of

the Lord.' When thus resigned, affliction will cease to be affliction, because it has produced the end designed by it. O, my dear boy, I know what I am writing; I am not a novice in the school of Christ. It is said of Luther, that he could not understand some psalms till he was afflicted. Christ's cross is no letter in the book, 'and yet,' says he, 'it has taught me more than all the letters in the book.' O, yes, affliction is a golden key, by which the Lord opens the rich treasures of his word to his people; and I think you will have to acknowledge it before you get off your couch, —this I have experienced. The benefit of this affliction may be handed down to your grandchildren, as I trust you have derived profit from those of your grandfather. Read the last verse in Micah, and see with what solemnity the covenant of grace is ratified to you, and with what satisfaction it may be relied on by you. The Lord will perform his truth and mercy; not one jot or tittle of it shall fail. Faithful is he that hath promised, who also will do it. O, let us, my dear boy, rejoice in and praise the pardoning mercy of our family God. Amen.

"I remain your affectionate father,

"THOMAS CRANFIELD.

"*Sept. 6th*, 1838."

In closing the memoir of this extraordinary man, it will be only necessary to add, that it has not been attempted here to draw a perfect character. Mr. Cranfield, no doubt, had his failings, like all other men; but no one understood them better than he did, nor could any one be more ready to condemn them, than he was to condemn himself. It is sufficient to observe that "watch and pray" was his motto; and that his life was a practical commentary upon the words of the apostle, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away."

May the surviving members of the bereaved family, and those who were the companions and fellow-laborers of this eminently favored disciple of Jesus—of whose useful and protracted career a plain and faithful account has been thus attempted—together with all that shall peruse this narrative, "be followers of him who, through faith and patience, now inherits the promises," and, like him, "receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, and reign in life by Jesus Christ."—To whom be glory for ever! Amen.

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